三國群英傳

火鳳燎原

34

陳某

BEING HANDICAPPED ONE HAS NO PROSPECTS THOUGH ONE IS A SURVIVOR

BEING A WARRIOR ONE TUMBLES LIKE A LANDSLIDE AFTER DEFEAT

CHAPTER 270	A DRINK BETWEEN ANTI-HEROES	3
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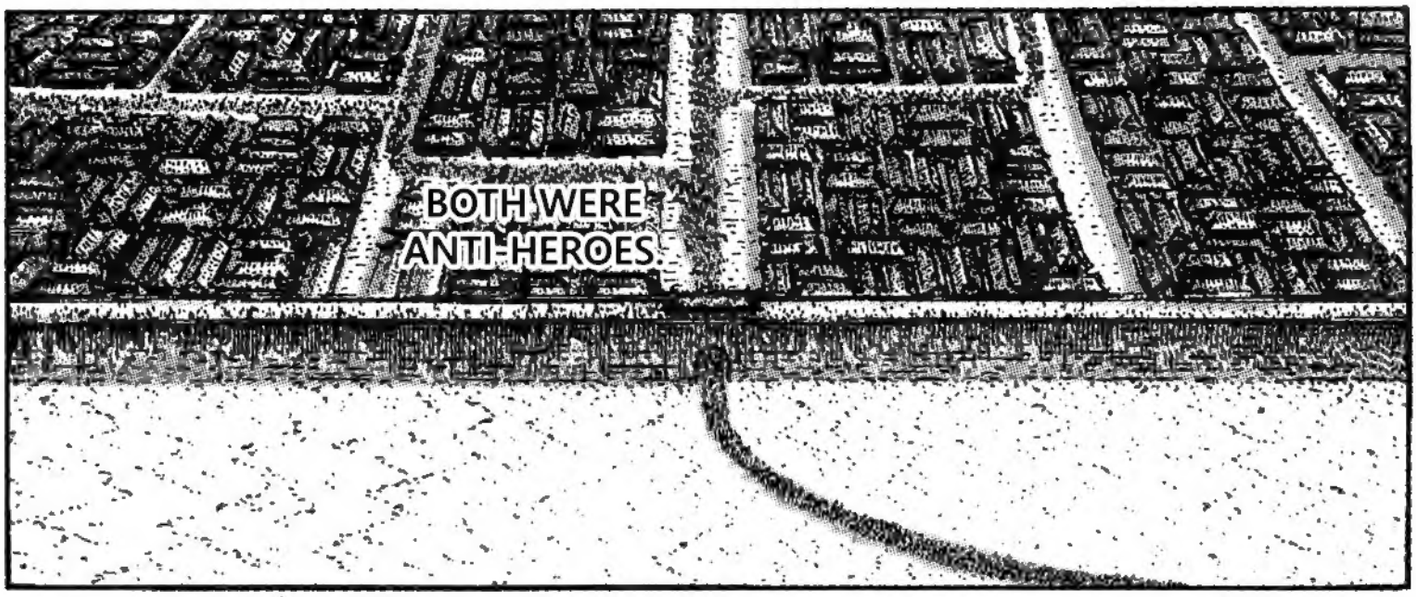
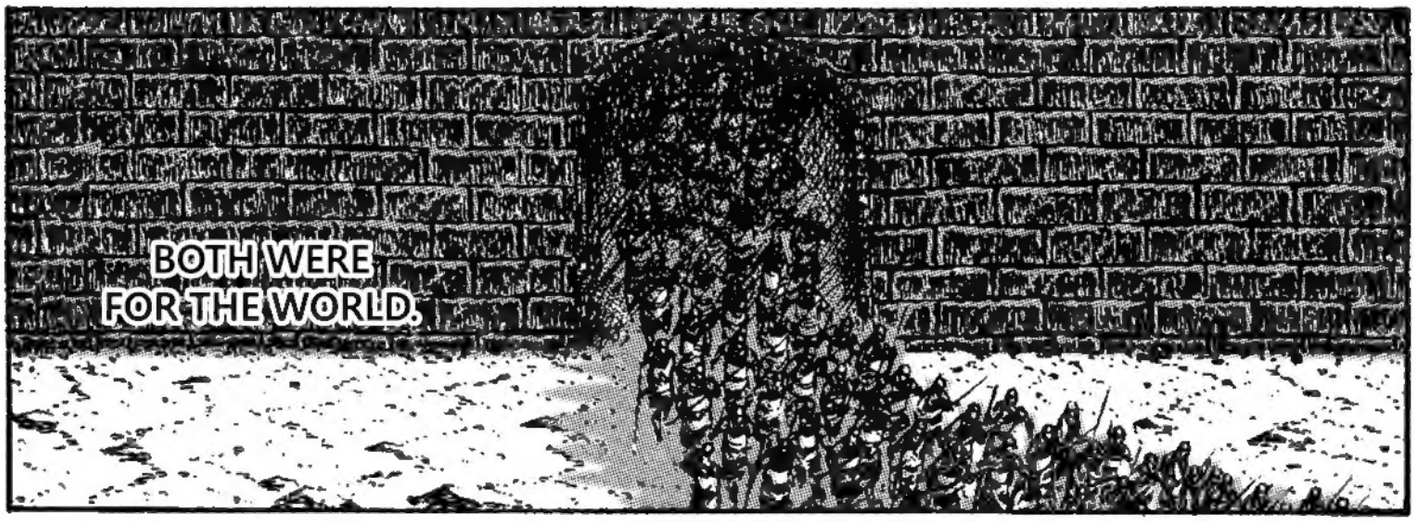
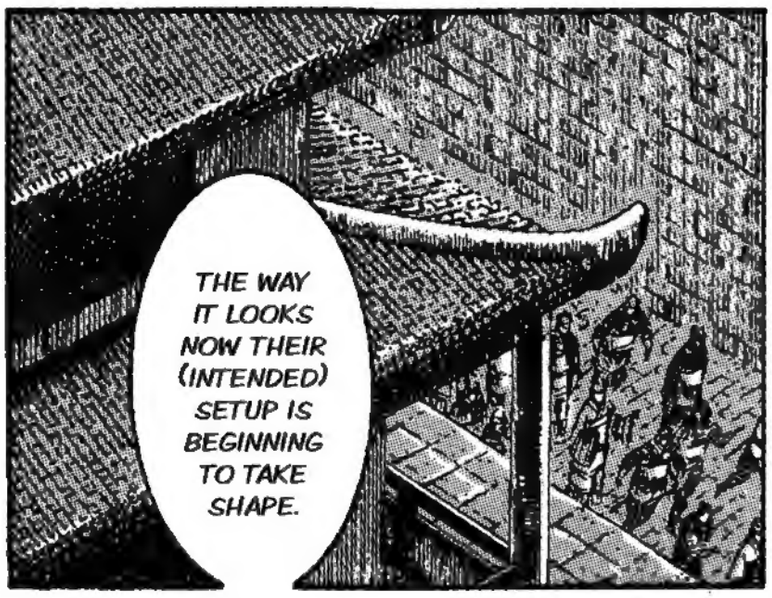
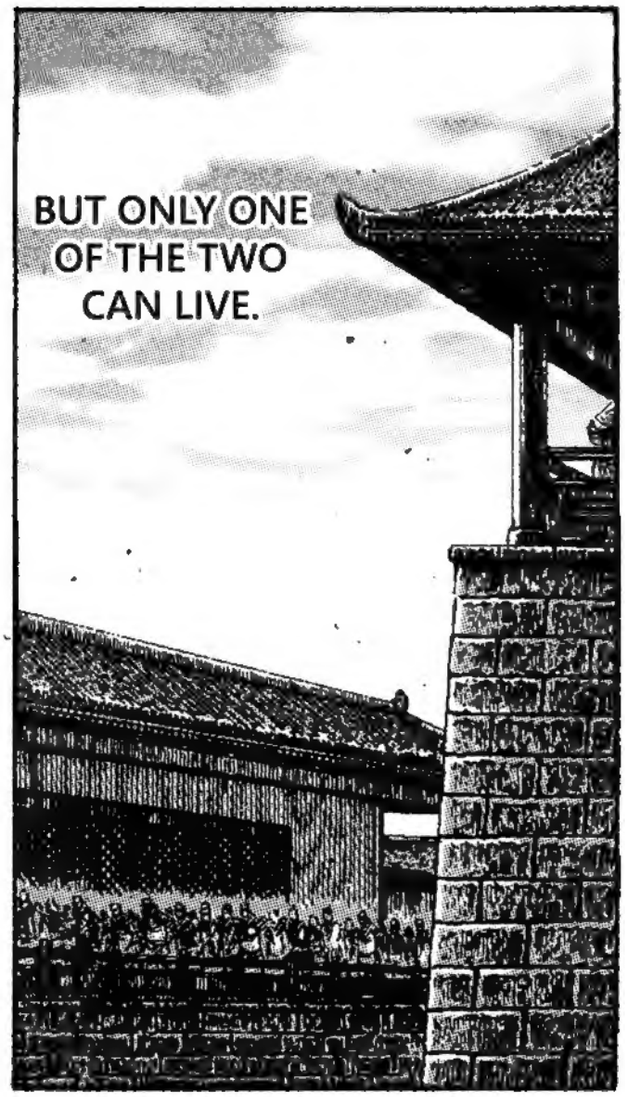
SCANNED AND EDITED BY ILLYA_
TRANSLATIONS APPROPRIATED FROM MERC


BOTH WERE
ANTI-HEROES.

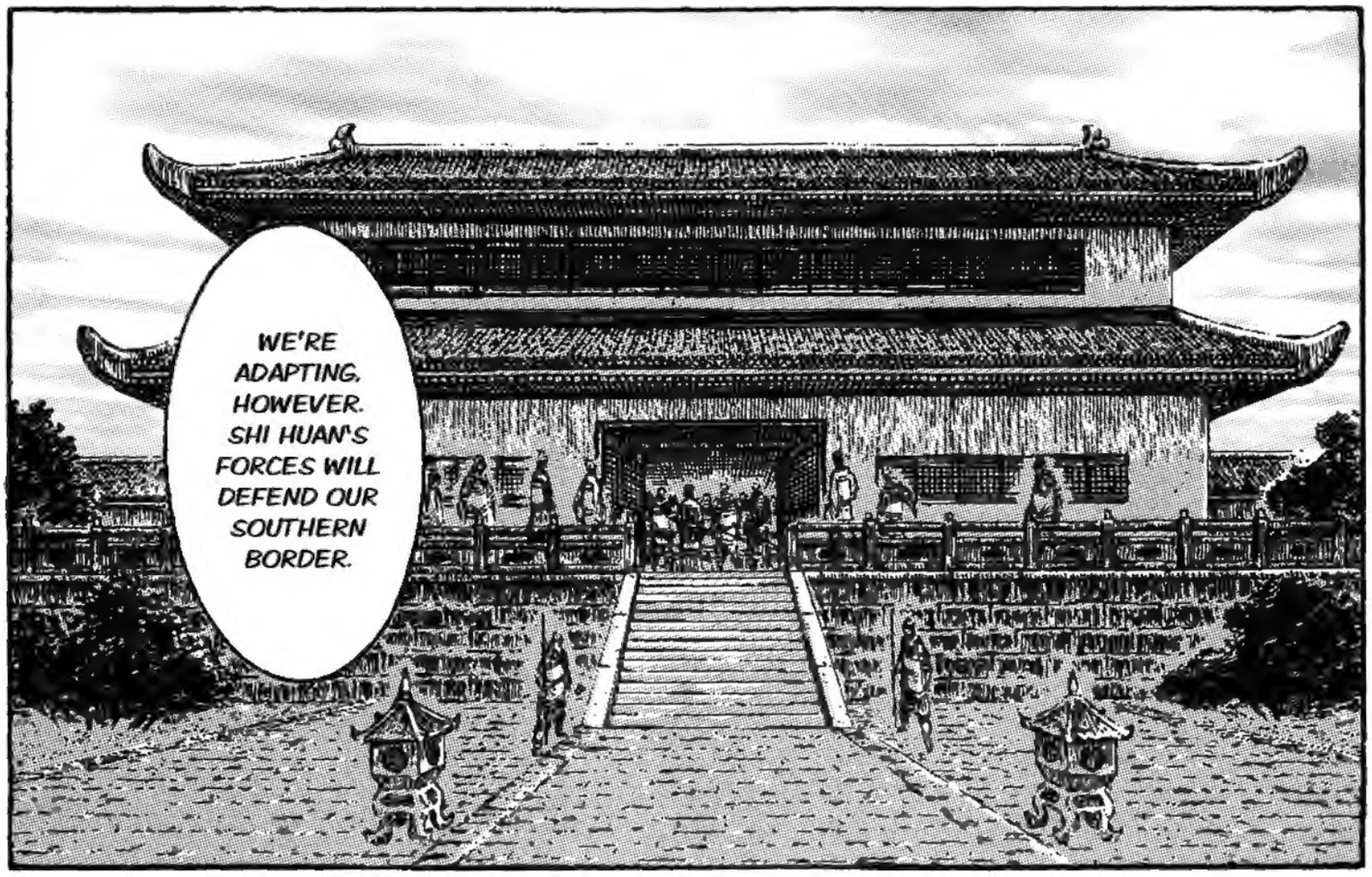

BOTH WERE
FOR THE WORLD.

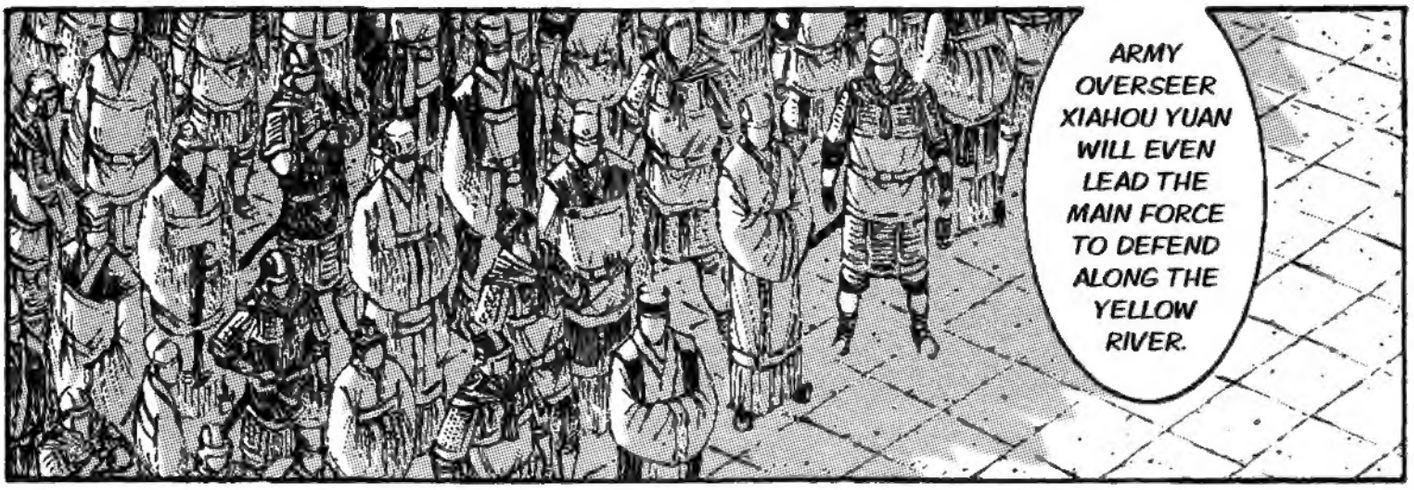
SO FAST.
YUAN SHAO
HAS ALREADY
DEPLOYED
TROOPS IN
SHEQUAN
LAST YEAR.

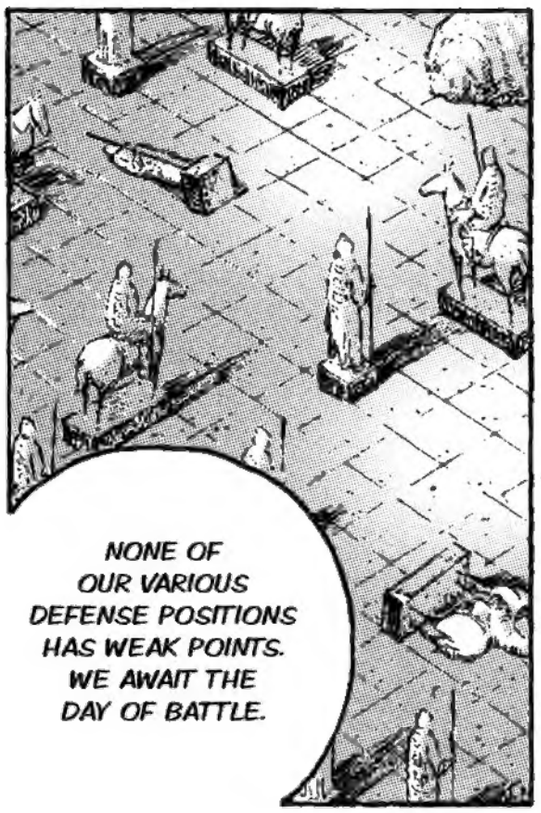

THE WAY
IT LOOKS
NOW THEIR
(INTENDED)
SETUP IS
BEGINNING
TO TAKE
SHAPE.


BUT ONLY ONE
OF THE TWO
CAN LIVE.

CHAPTER 270 A DRINK BETWEEN ANTI-HEROES

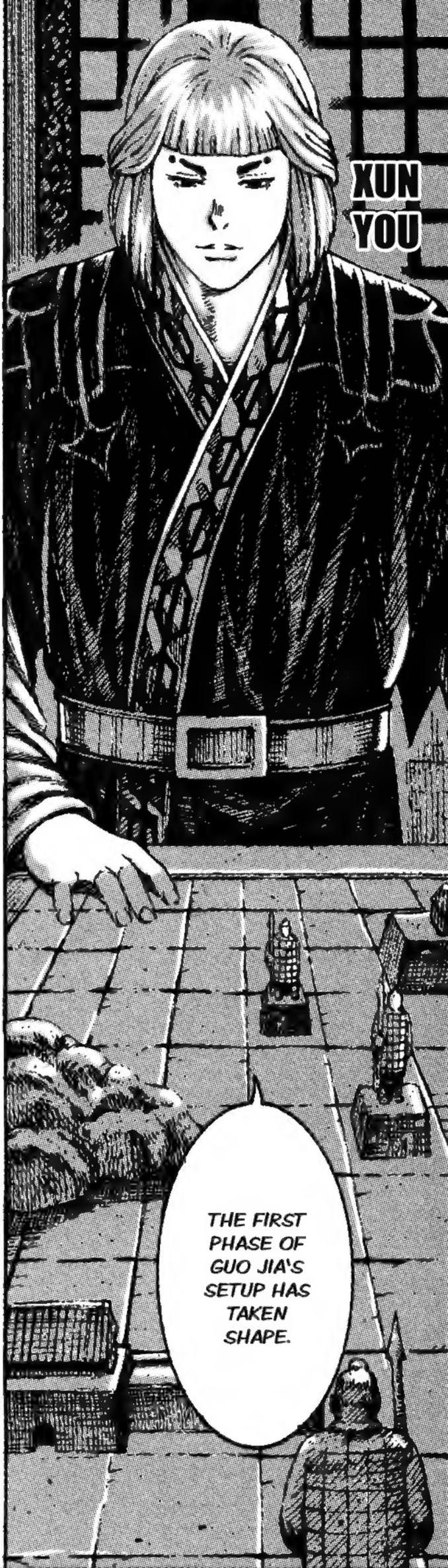

WE'RE ADAPTING. HOWEVER. SHI HUAN'S FORCES WILL DEFEND OUR SOUTHERN BORDER.

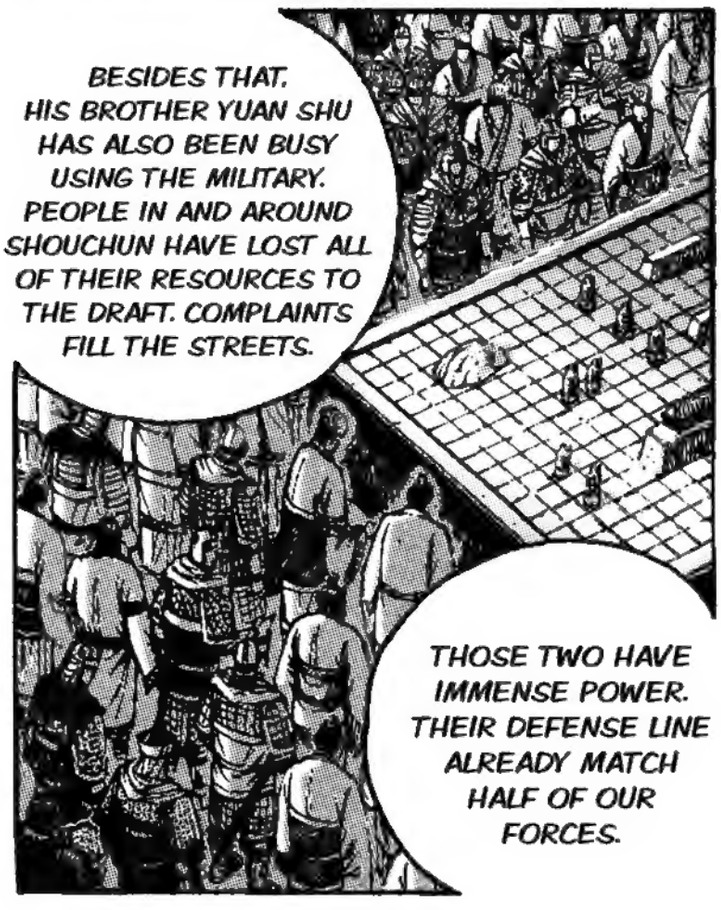

ARMY OVERSEER XIAHOU YUAN WILL EVEN LEAD THE MAIN FORCE TO DEFEND ALONG THE YELLOW RIVER.


NONE OF OUR VARIOUS DEFENSE POSITIONS HAS WEAK POINTS. WE AWAIT THE DAY OF BATTLE.

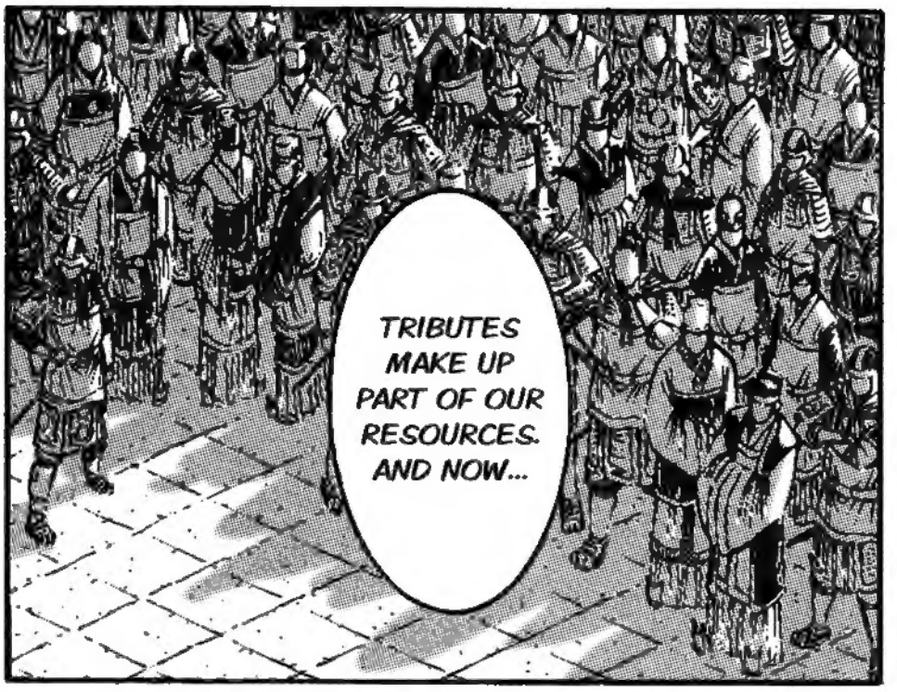
YUE JIN WILL SPECIALIZE IN SURPRISE ATTACKS WHILE LI DIAN WILL BE IN CHARGE OF THE SUPPLY LINE. EVERYTHING IS IN ORDER.

AS WE APPROACH WAR, YUAN SHAO CERTAINLY HAS DRASTICALLY REDUCED HIS TRIBUTES TO THE EMPEROR – A TELLTALE SIGN.
CAO REN


XUN YOU
THE FIRST PHASE OF GUO JIA'S SETUP HAS TAKEN SHAPE.


BESIDES THAT, HIS BROTHER YUAN SHU HAS ALSO BEEN BUSY USING THE MILITARY. PEOPLE IN AND AROUND SHOUCHUN HAVE LOST ALL OF THEIR RESOURCES TO THE DRAFT. COMPLAINTS FILL THE STREETS.
THOSE TWO HAVE IMMENSE POWER. THEIR DEFENSE LINE ALREADY MATCH HALF OF OUR FORCES.

ACCORDING TO REPORTS, LIU BIAO HAS BEEN EXPANDING HIS ARMY RECENTLY. TOTALING OVER A HUNDRED THOUSAND MEN.
THE MOST WORRISOME THING IS THAT OUR FORCES ARE ALL CONCENTRATED IN THE NORTH. WE'LL BE IN SERIOUS TROUBLE IF JINGZHOU'S LIU BIAO ALLIES WITH THE YUAN CLAN.

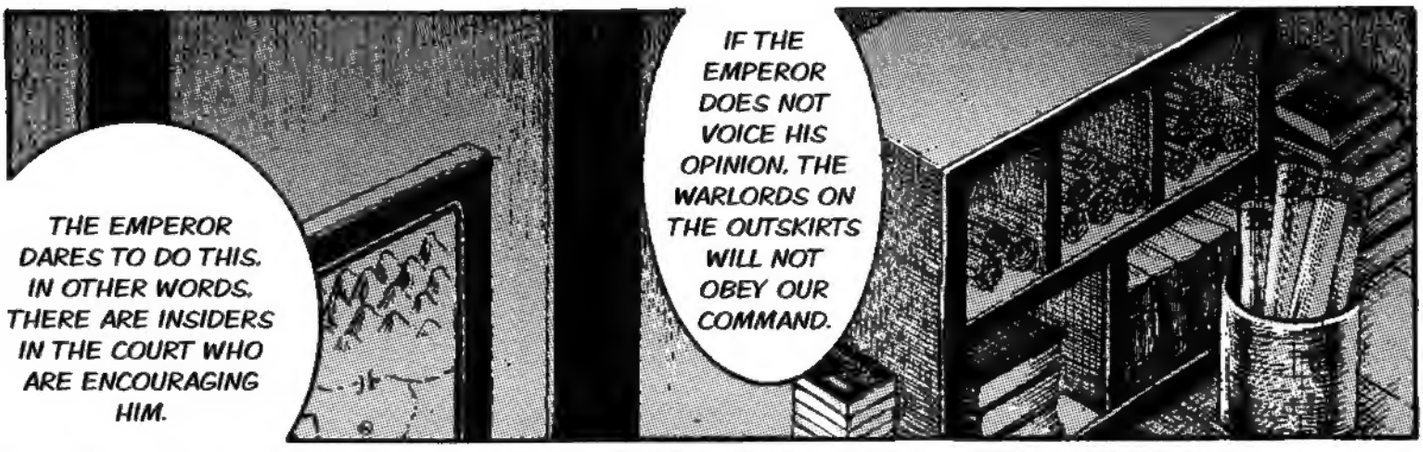

TRIBUTES MAKE UP PART OF OUR RESOURCES. AND NOW...

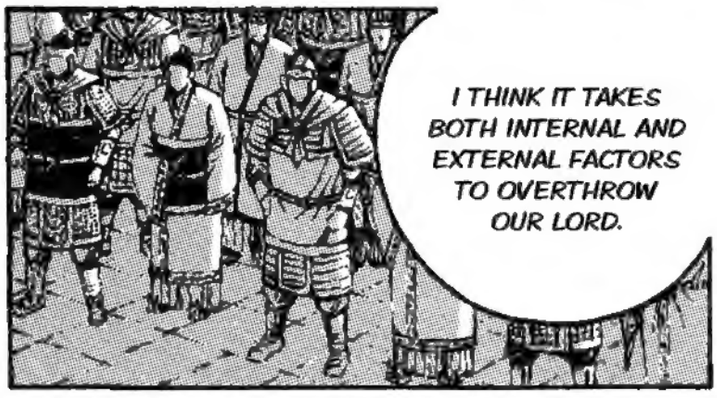
COINCIDENTALLY, LIU BIAO'S TRIBUTES THESE MONTHS HAVE ALSO DECREASED.
CAO HONG

IT'S WEIRD; THE COURT IS CALM, AND THE EMPEROR IS TAKING IT ALL IN STRIDE.

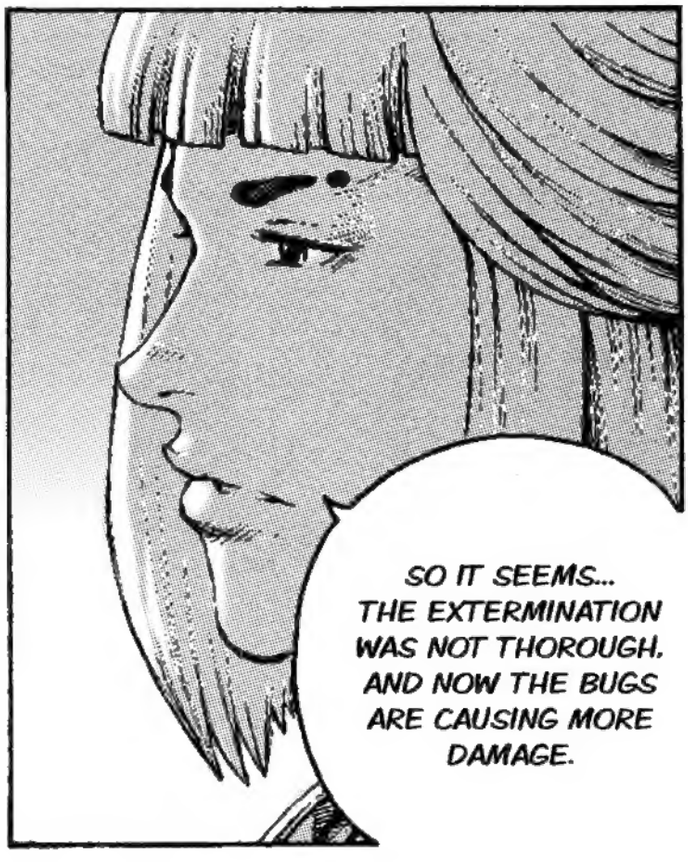
SO WHAT DO MEMBERS OF THE COURT THINK OF THIS SITUATION?

THAT MEANS... THE EMPEROR APPROVES OF THIS AS WELL.


THE EMPEROR DARES TO DO THIS. IN OTHER WORDS, THERE ARE INSIDERS IN THE COURT WHO ARE ENCOURAGING HIM.
IF THE EMPEROR DOES NOT VOICE HIS OPINION, THE WARLORDS ON THE OUTSKIRTS WILL NOT OBEY OUR COMMAND.

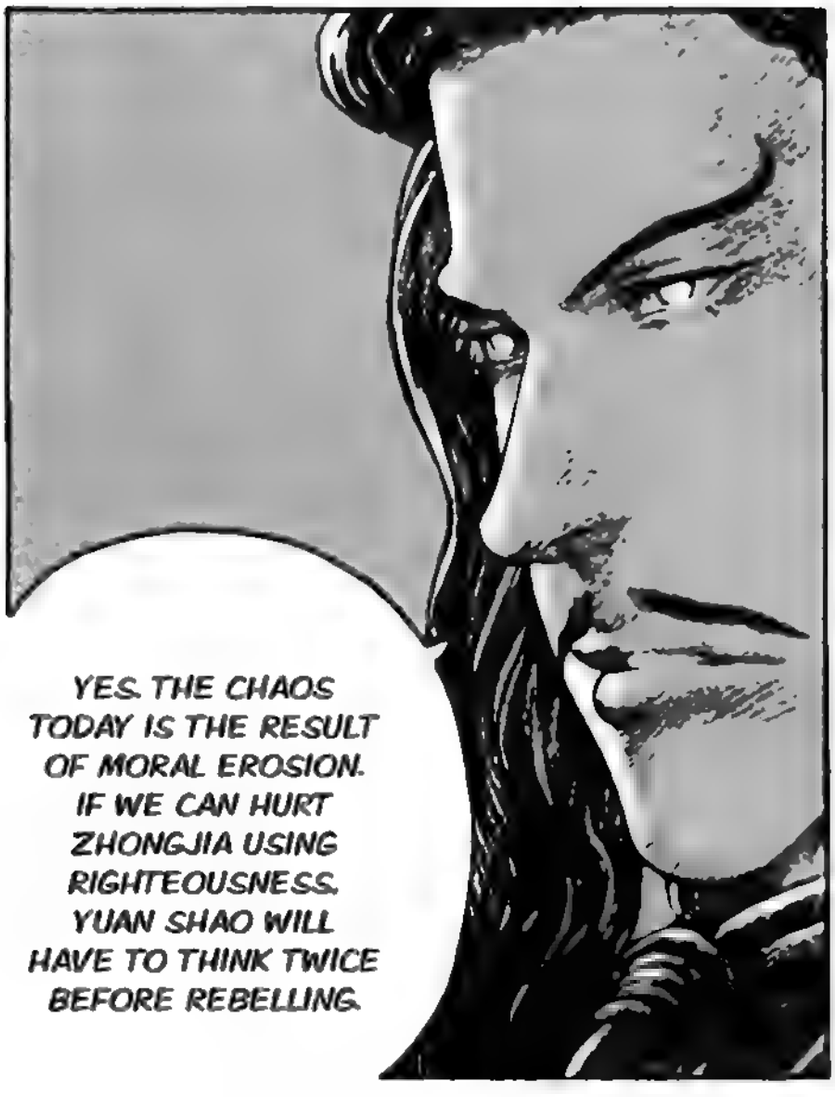

I THINK IT TAKES BOTH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS TO OVERTHROW OUR LORD.

YUAN SHAO TO OUR NORTH; LIU BIAO TO OUR SOUTH; WHICH (TRAITOR) AMONG US?

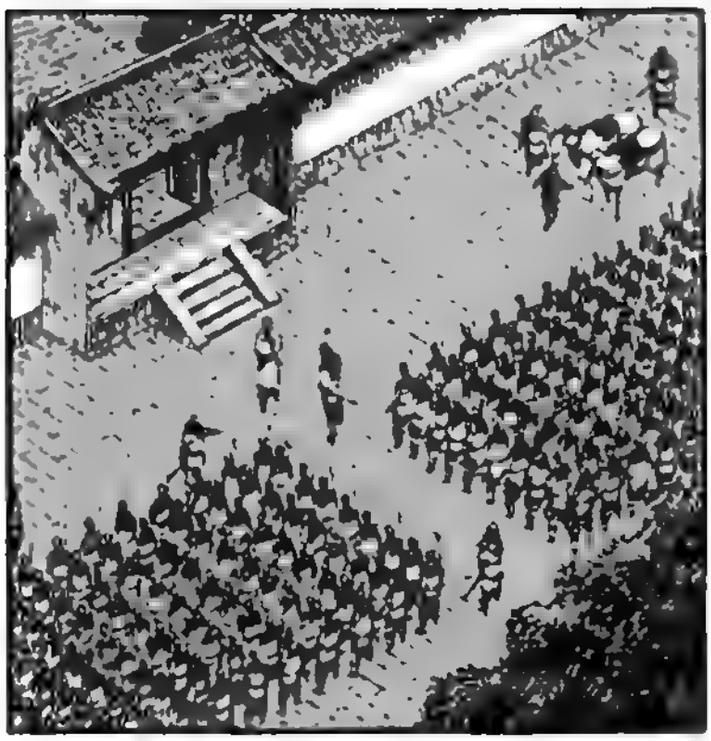

SO IT SEEMS... THE EXTERMINATION WAS NOT THOROUGH, AND NOW THE BUGS ARE CAUSING MORE DAMAGE.

MA TENG'S FORCE IS NOT WEAK. HM, ANOTHER LOOSE END.
YUAN SHAO'S ABNORMAL BEHAVIOR HAS ALERTED US TO CALL XILIANG'S MA TENG TO AID OUR NORTHERN DEFENSES. THE XILIANG ARMY MOVES FAST. IF THEY LISTEN TO YUAN SHAO'S COMMAND, THEY CAN OCCUPY XU (CAPITAL) WITHIN A DAY.
IF THEY ADD LIU BIAO AND MA TENG, THEIR ALLIED FORCES WILL BE MORE THAN TEN TIMES THE SIZE OF OURS.
GUO JIA WILL DEAL WITH YUAN SHAO WHILE WE HANDLE THE REST. NOW THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS WHO WILL LIGHT THE FUSE.
BUT THESE CAN ONLY HAPPEN AFTER YUAN SHAO MAKES HIS MOVE.
I HAVE AN IDEA TO TAKE ON YUAN SHU.
THE ZHONGJIA EMPIRE, NO DOUBT.

*NOTE A ... IRT OF COUPLET POEM ... TEOUSNESS TO REDIRECT THE WIND."

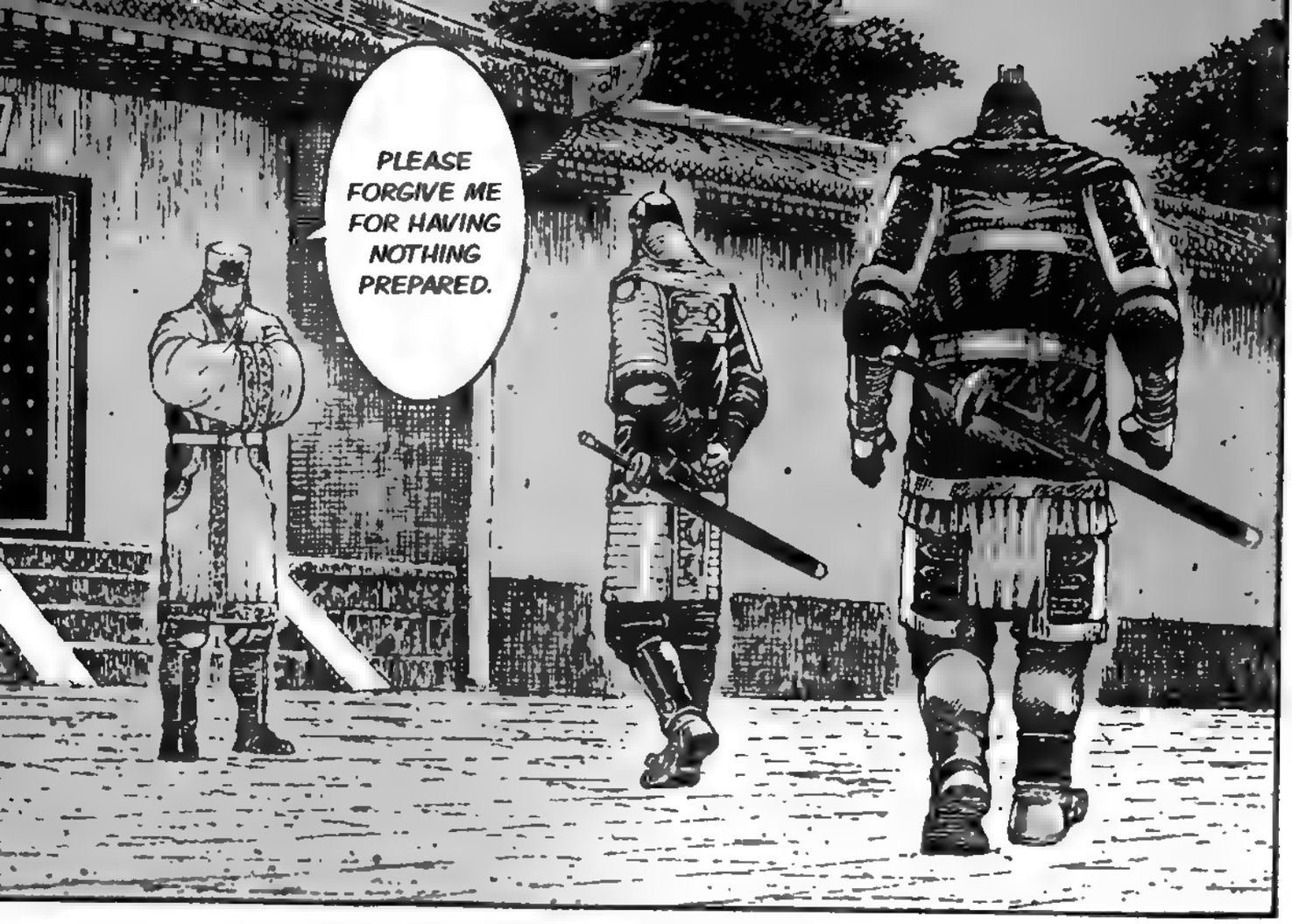


I BELIEVE AN ELITE ARMY OF TEN THOUSAND IS ENOUGH TO FIGHT THE ZHONGJIA EMPIRE.
JIA KUI, YUAN SHAO WILL SURELY FIND AN OPPORTUNITY AGAINST US IF WE ATTACK YUAN SHU. WE MIGHT WIN IN PRINCIPLE, BUT WE'RE IN DANGER OF LOSING OUR GROUND!
WITH THAT SMALL AN ARMY, THE COMMANDER MUST REALLY HAVE THE ABILITY TO RALLY THE WORLD.
OUR LORD TOOK HIM IN BECAUSE HE UNDERSTOOD THE ESSENCE OF ADVISOR XUN YU'S MILITARY PHILOSOPHY...
THAT'S RIGHT. NOT ONLY MUST HE BE GOOD AT COMMAND, HIS REPUTATION MUST ALSO BE WORLD RENOWNED IN ORDER TO UNITE THE SCATTERED WARLORDS FOR THIS CAUSE.



I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE COMING, MY LORD.

MAINTAIN AN ARMY FOR A THOUSAND DAYS FOR USE IN ONE (CRUCIAL) MOMENT.


PLEASE FORGIVE ME FOR HAVING NOTHING PREPARED.

THEN... I'LL NOTIFY HIM.
MI ZHU

XU CHU
NO NEED. WE'LL SHOW OURSELVES IN.

XIAHOU DÙN
YOU'RE TOO KIND, SIR MI ZHU. WE'RE ONLY HERE TO VISIT THE IMPERIAL UNCLE.

NOTHING'S CHANGED. XUAN DE.
OH.

WHAT YOU'RE DOING ALSO STARTLES ME, IMPERIAL UNCLE.

YOUR SUDDEN VISIT STARTLED ME, LORD CAO.

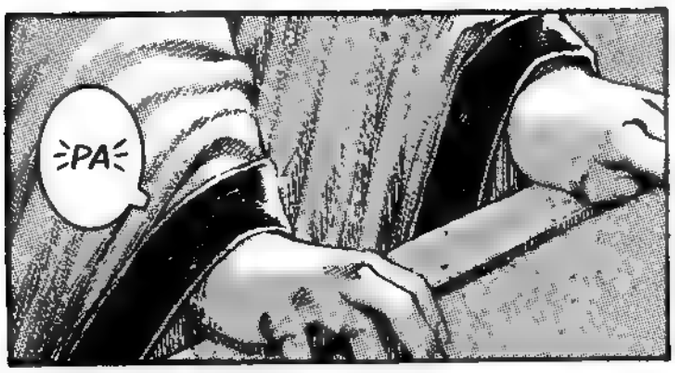
I'M ASHAMED TO SAY THAT WORK HAS MADE ME FORGET ABOUT YOU, WHO WAS A GREAT HELP IN ELIMINATING LÜ BU.

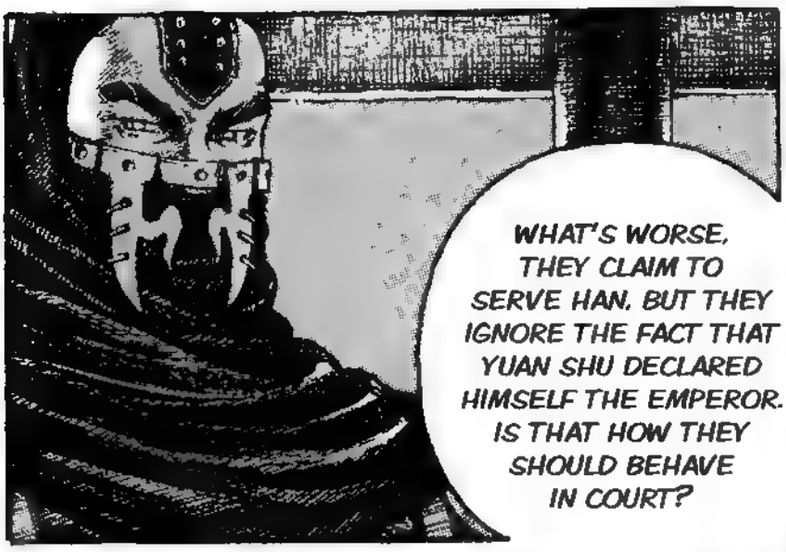
HAVING PREPARED SOME WINE AND APPETIZER, TODAY I MAKE A POINT TO DRINK WITH YOU.

EVEN COMMONERS ARE TALKING ABOUT IT; YET YOU HIDE AT HOME, IMPERIAL UNCLE.
YOU KNOW, YUAN SHAO'S ACTIVITIES THESE DAYS HAVE ALARMED THE WORLD.
CAN IT BE THAT TENDING TO YOUR GARDEN IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN DISCUSSING POLITICS IN THE COURT?
I'M A DESCENDANT OF PRINCE JING OF ZHONGSHAN. I AM CONTENT WITH THE OFFICIAL ACKNOWLEDG-MENT.
YOU WANT THE HONEST TRUTH, LORD CAO?
PLEASE.
THAT'S NOWHERE NEAR WHAT YOU SAID AT THE WHITE GATE TOWER. PLEASE SPEAK YOUR MIND.

HAHA. YOU REMIND ME OF MYSELF WHEN I WAS NEW TO POLITICS.

THE COURT IS FULL OF IDIOTS AND SCOUNDRELS. I CAN'T STAND THEM!


PA


WHAT'S WORSE, THEY CLAIM TO SERVE HAN. BUT THEY IGNORE THE FACT THAT YUAN SHU DECLARED HIMSELF THE EMPEROR. IS THAT HOW THEY SHOULD BEHAVE IN COURT?

YUAN SHAO'S RECENT ACTION HAS ANGERED ANYONE WHO HAS HEARD ABOUT IT, AND YET NONE OF THE MINISTERS REPRIMANDED HIM.

YUAN SHAO'S ROYAL CLAN IS KNOWN FOR THREE GENERATIONS OF DEDICATION TO THE EMPEROR. BUT HIS ACTION DEVIATES FROM THIS LOYALTY. IT'S UNFATHOMABLE.

YOUR SHOW OF INTEGRITY MAKES YUAN SHAO APPEAR MORE DISHONORABLE.
HERE.
BUT IMPERIAL UNCLE, DID YOU KNOW THAT SOMEONE IS BEHIND YUAN SHAO'S REBELLION?
AND HE HAS SUCH A BACKGROUND THAT EVEN I WAS CAUGHT OFF-GUARD...

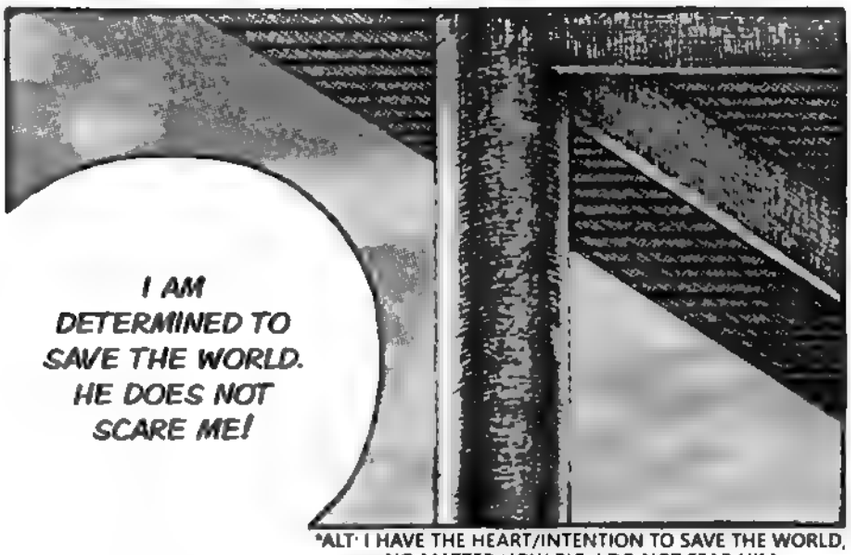
噔
*SFX THUNDER

*SFX. THUNDER
噌

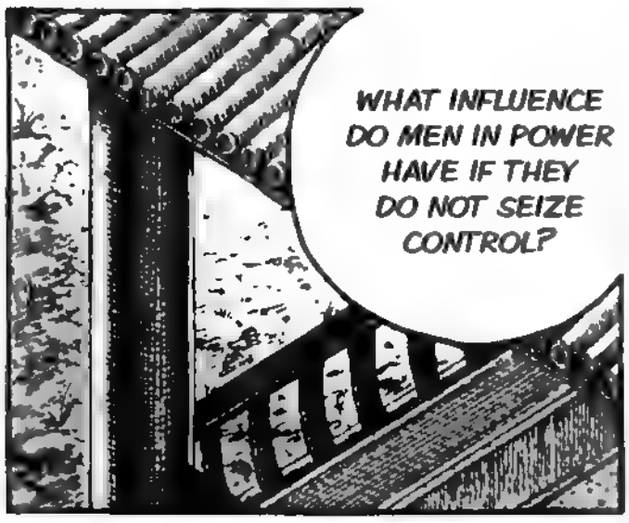
乒
*SFX CUP SHATTER

*SFX THUNDER
噌

HE IS STILL NO MATCH FOR HEAVEN.
*ALT NO MATTER HOW BIG HE IS HE CAN T BE BIGGER THAN THE SKY


I AM DETERMINED TO SAVE THE WORLD. HE DOES NOT SCARE ME!
*ALT· I HAVE THE HEART/INTENTION TO SAVE THE WORLD, NO MATTER HOW BIG, I DO NOT FEAR HIM

HIS MAJESTY IS STILL YOUNG. HE DOES NOT UNDERSTAND YOUR INTENTIONS!


WHAT INFLUENCE DO MEN IN POWER HAVE IF THEY DO NOT SEIZE CONTROL?

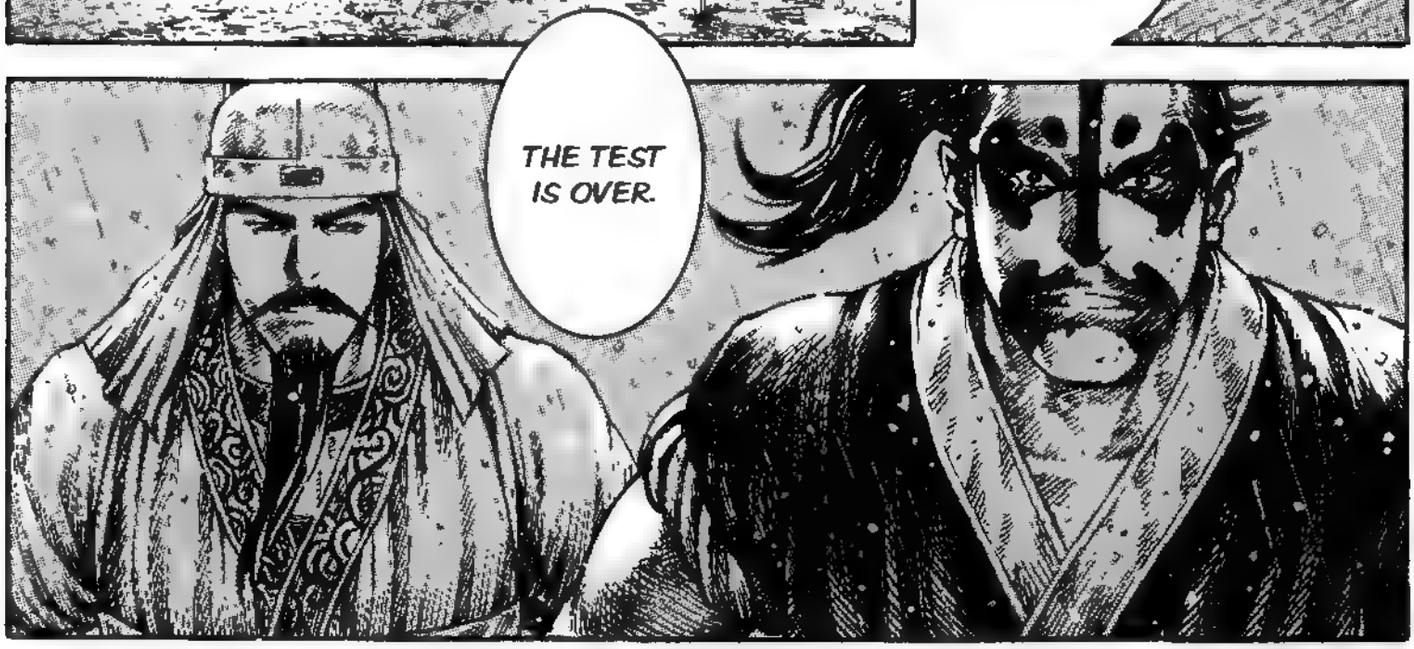
WHAT GREAT THINGS CAN SAVIORS ACCOMPLISH IF THEY ARE NOT DICTATORS?

THE WORLD CANNOT BE SAVED BY A NAIVE YOUNGSTER WHO CHANGES POLICIES AT WHIM.
THE WORLD CANNOT BE SAVED BY FOOLISH SUBJECTS OF THE FORMER REGIME WITH THEIR USELESS POLITICS.
ONLY YOU AND I WALK THE SAME PATH!
OF ALL THE HEROES IN THE WORLD,

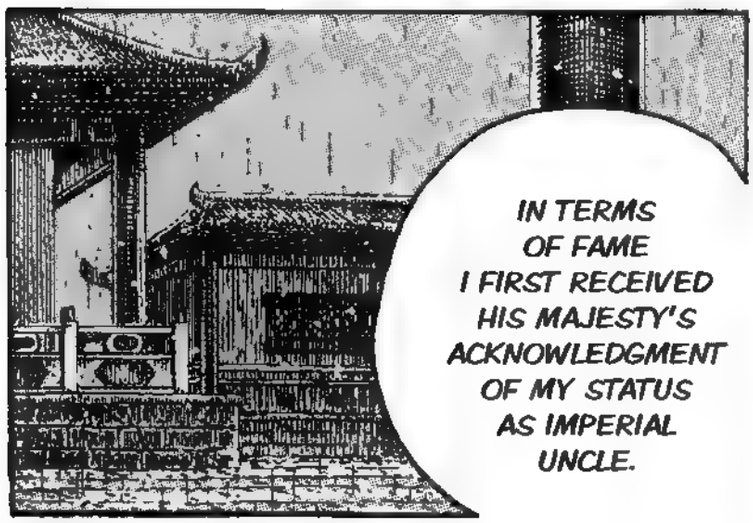
I DON'T ATTEND (THE COURT), LORD CAO, BECAUSE OF BUG(S).
IMPERIAL UNCLE. YOU ARE HEREBY ORDERED TO ASSEMBLE TEN THOUSAND ELITES WITH FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND IN FUNDING TO MARCH TO XUZHOU AND ELIMINATE YUAN SHU.
THEN I ASK YOU, IMPERIAL UNCLE, TO ELIMINATE THE BUG(S) FOR THE WORLD!
ALL RIGHT!
YES-SIR!

SAFE JOURNEY.
IT'S ABOUT TO RAIN. NEXT TIME WE'LL DRINK AND TALK ABOUT THE WORLD AGAIN!
SFX RAIN

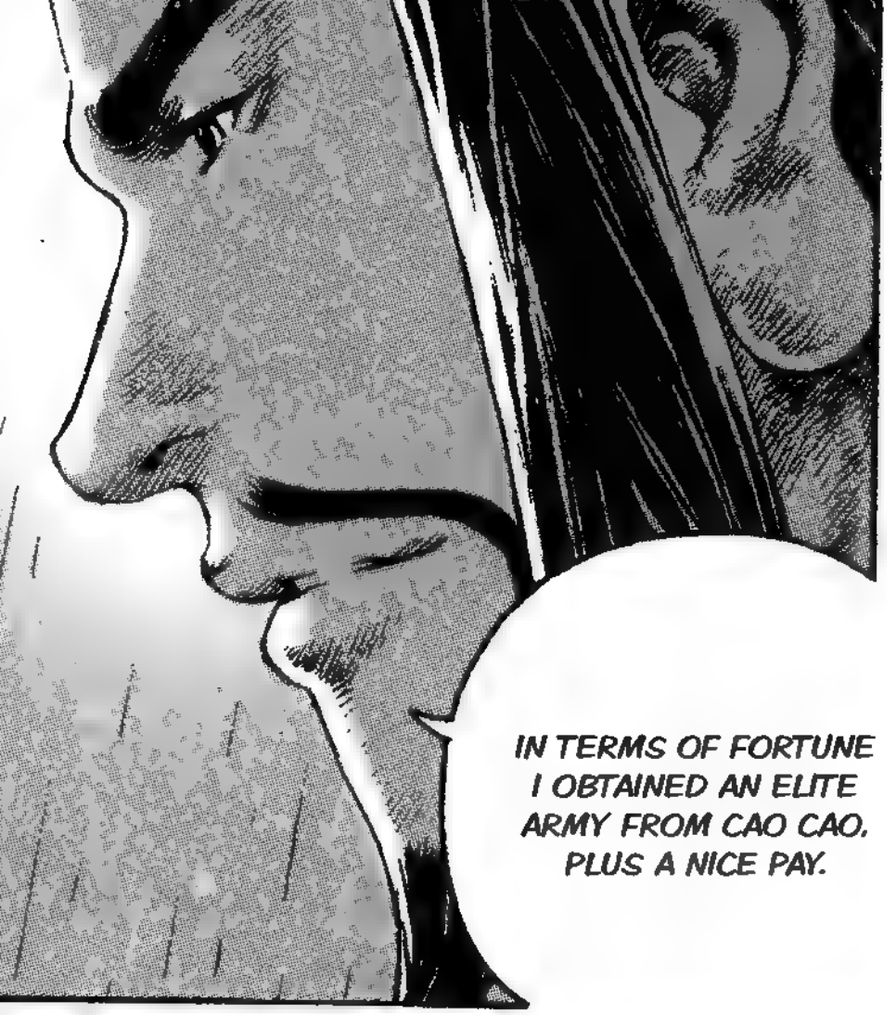
WHAT? CAO CAO WAS HERE? THEN...
DON'T WORRY. OUR LORD IS FINE.


THE TEST IS OVER.

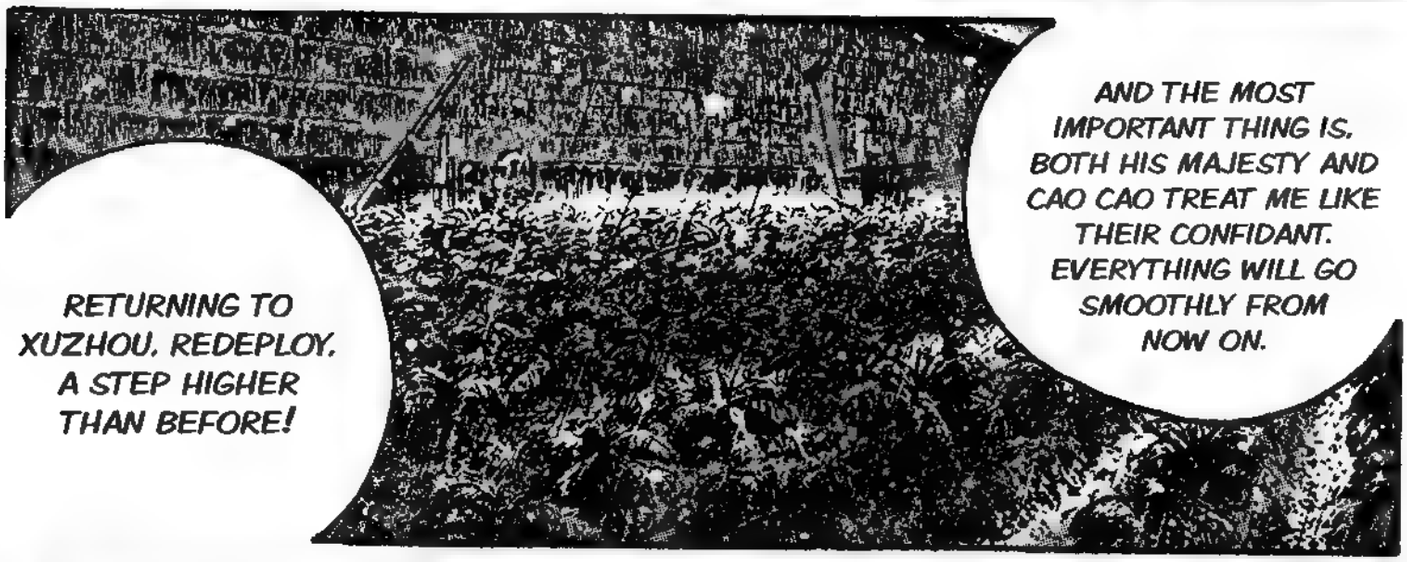
ZI LONG WAS RIGHT; I WOULD GAIN BOTH FAME AND FORTUNE IF I STAYED HERE.


IN TERMS OF FAME I FIRST RECEIVED HIS MAJESTY'S ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF MY STATUS AS IMPERIAL UNCLE.

AS ANOTHER ANTI-HERO, HOW COULD I NOT KNOW CAO CAO'S INTENTION? THOUGH IT SURE WAS EASY TO GET ON HIS GOOD SIDE.


IN TERMS OF FORTUNE I OBTAINED AN ELITE ARMY FROM CAO CAO. PLUS A NICE PAY.

THEN I GET TO REPRESENT HAN IN THE FIGHT AGAINST YUAN SHU. THIS HAS ELEVATED MY REPUTATION TO A PREVIOUSLY UNREACHABLE HEIGHT.


AND THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS. BOTH HIS MAJESTY AND CAO CAO TREAT ME LIKE THEIR CONFIDANT. EVERYTHING WILL GO SMOOTHLY FROM NOW ON.
RETURNING TO XUZHOU. REDEPLOY. A STEP HIGHER THAN BEFORE!

WE'RE LIKE FISH IN THE WATER. MY BROTHERS.

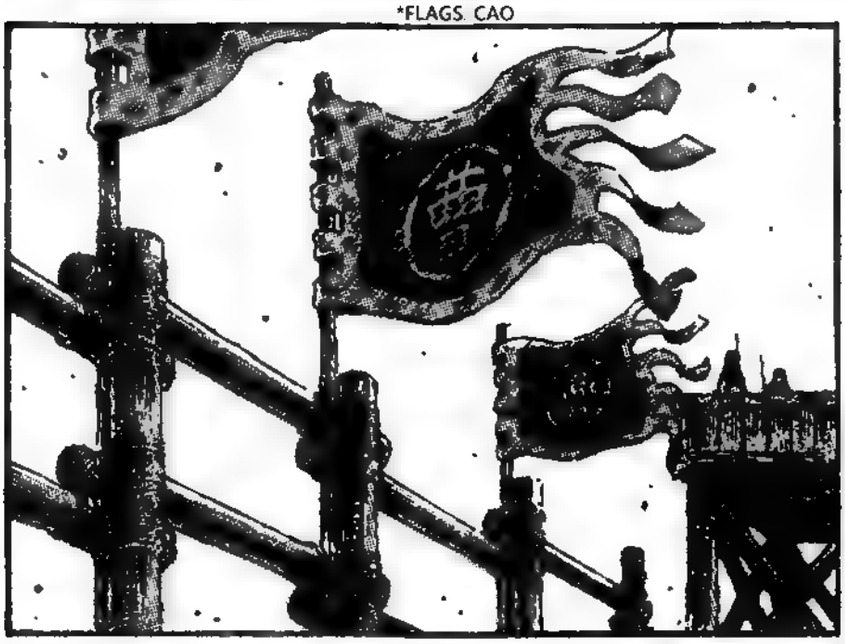
LET'S GO. WE'LL REMAIN ON THE OUTSIDE WITHOUT THIS CONSTANT VIGILANCE.

AND BIRDS
IN THE SKY.

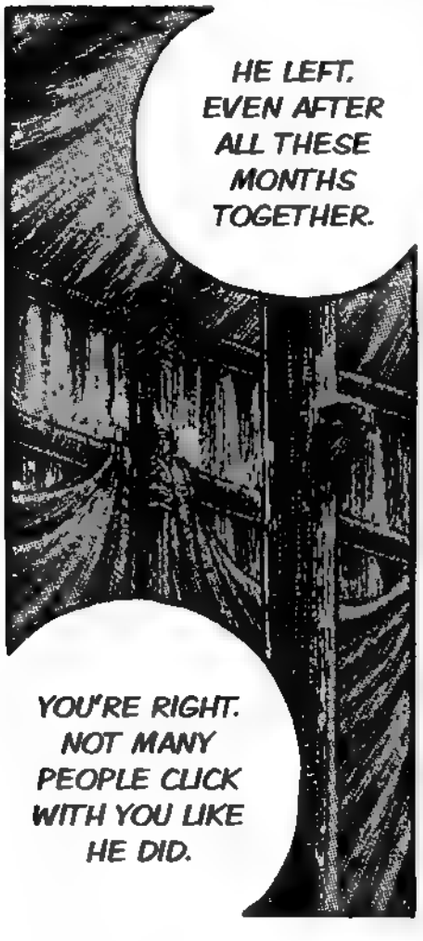
A FISH, A BIRD, OR IS IT A BUG?

BUTTERFLY OR LOCUST, WHO WOULD KNOW?

*FLAGS: CAO



SHEQUAN.
CAO ARMY'S
STAGING GROUND


HE LEFT. EVEN AFTER ALL THESE MONTHS TOGETHER.
YOU'RE RIGHT. NOT MANY PEOPLE CLICK WITH YOU LIKE HE DID.

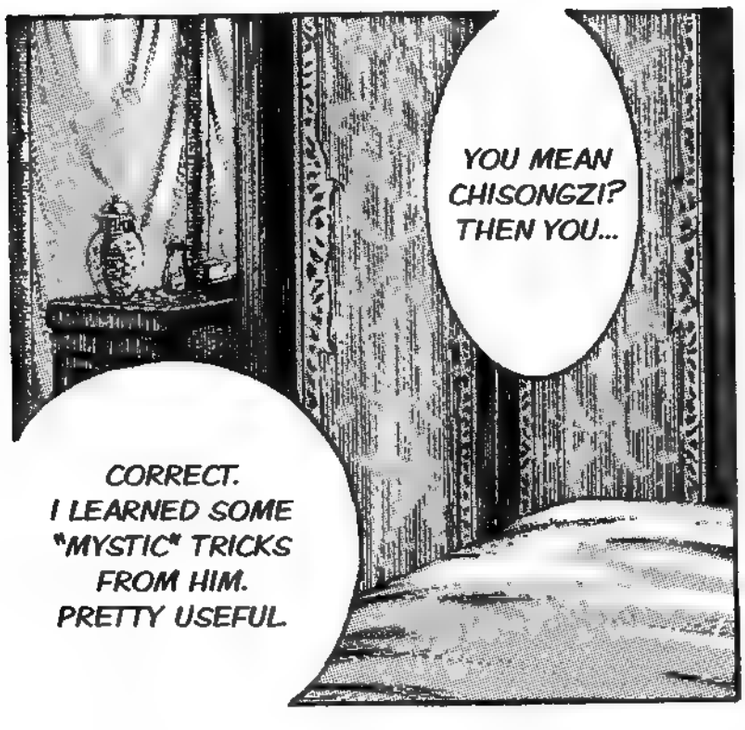
SOUNDS LIKE YOU DON'T WANT HIM TO GO?

CHAPTER 271 WARFARE TAKES RISKS

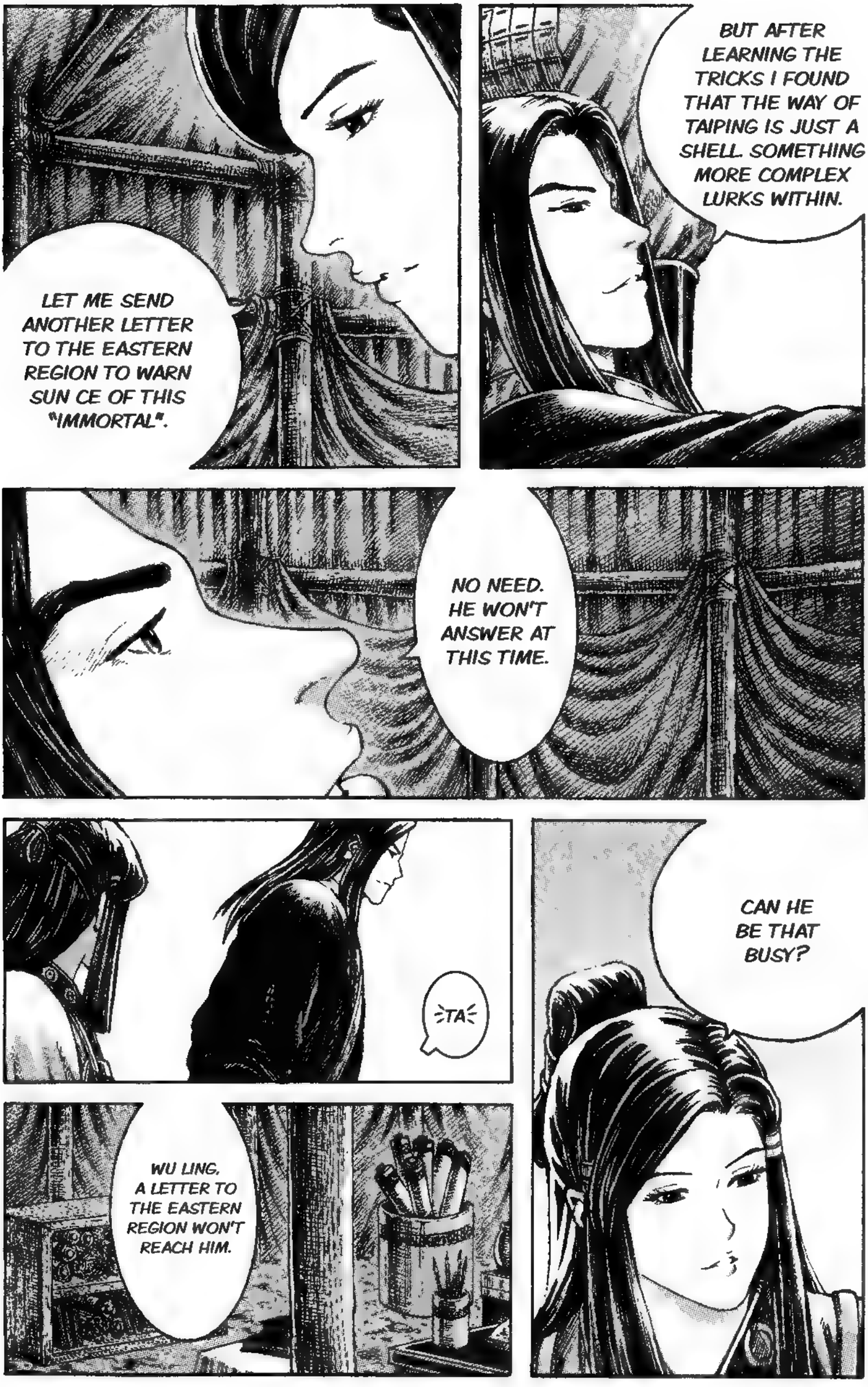
YES. NOW THE MOST INFLUENTIAL CLANS OF THE EASTERN REGION, LED BY THE QIAO FAMILY, HAVE ALL SUBMITTED TO THE SUN FAMILY.
YOU MEAN HOW WE ALWAYS TARGET BUSINESSMEN?
AND THE TWO QIAO DAUGHTERS HAVE "UNFORTUNATELY" ENDED UP WITH SUN CE AND ZHOU YU.
HE DID WELL IN ESTABLISHING THE RELATION. AS FOR THAT IMMORTAL FROM LANGYE...
ZHONG MOU'S TACTIC WAS JUST LIKE HOW YOU CRUDELY MARRIED ME.
YOU MEAN YU JI?
IT'S STRANGE. SUN CE DIDN'T TAKE HIM OUT, BUT RECRUITED HIM INSTEAD.

YU JI IS ALSO GOOD AT MIND GAMES. YOU CAN TELL WHAT HE'S UP TO WHEN HE PULLS BACK THE REVOLTING CIVILIANS.

YOU SURE KNOW THIS YU JI. CAN IT BE...
WU LING, REMEMBER HOW I LIKE TO PLAY CELESTIAL BEINGS?

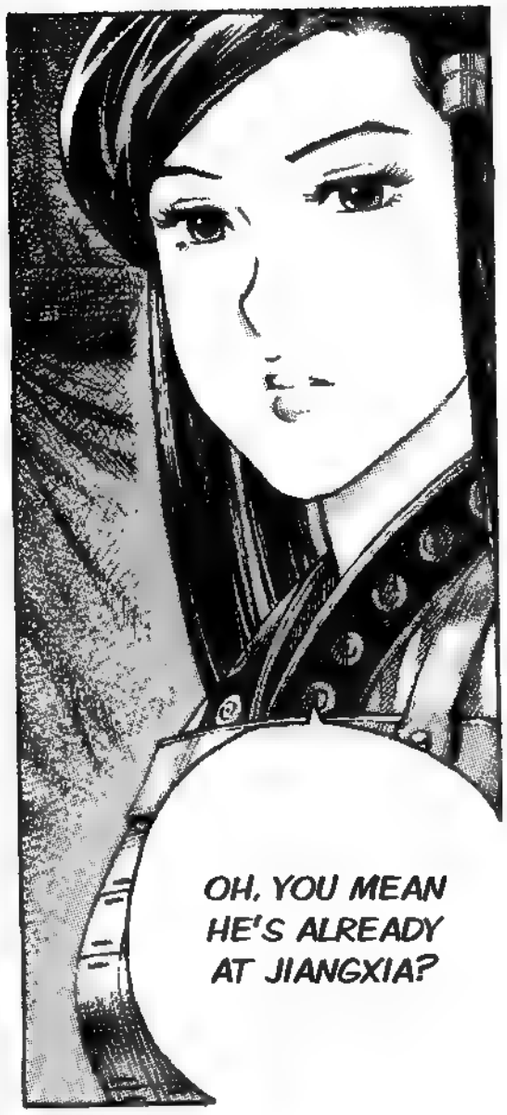

YOU MEAN CHISONGZI? THEN YOU...
CORRECT. I LEARNED SOME "MYSTIC" TRICKS FROM HIM. PRETTY USEFUL.

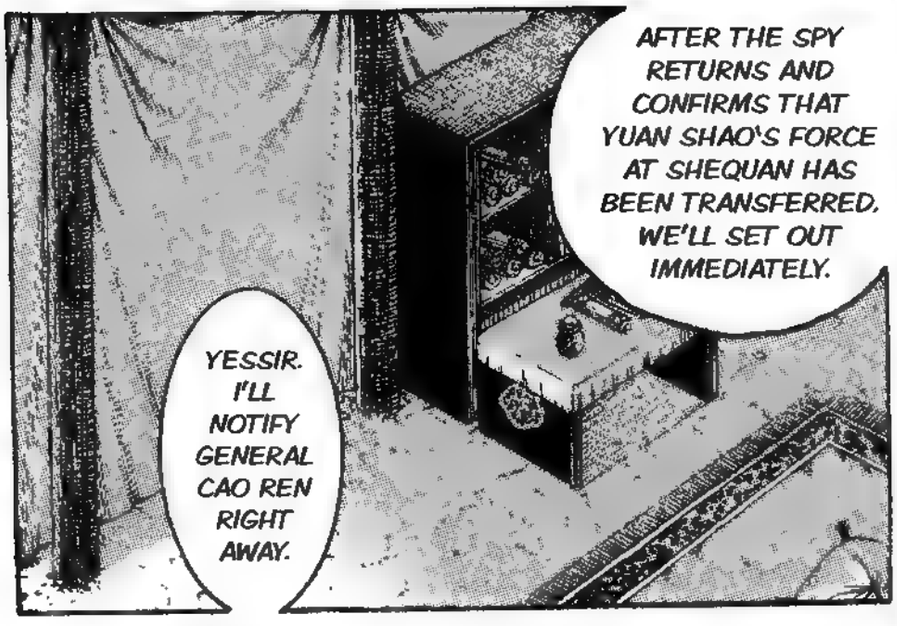
I HAVE ALWAYS SAID SUN CE IS A SMART MAN. HE HAS HIS REASONS FOR KEEPING YU JI ALIVE.

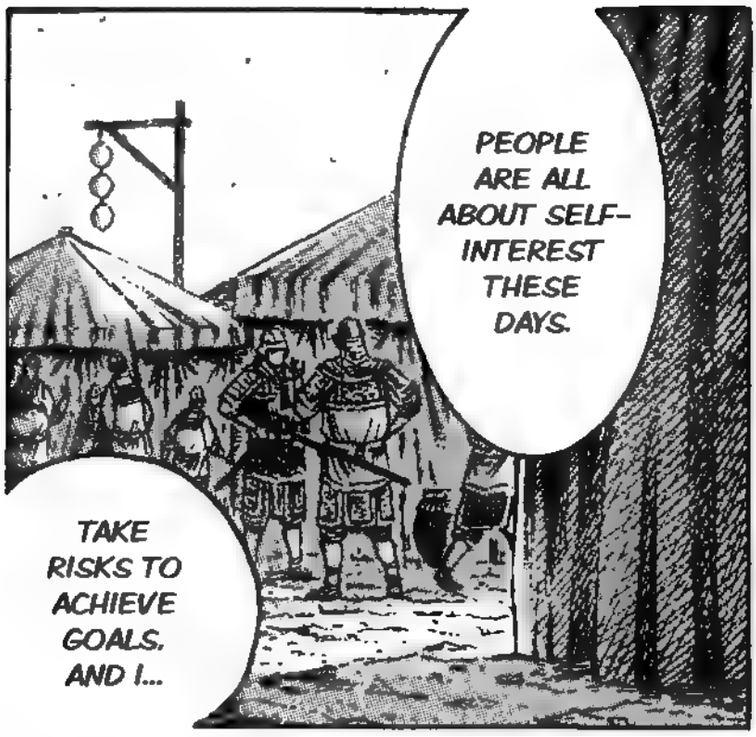

LET ME SEND ANOTHER LETTER TO THE EASTERN REGION TO WARN SUN CE OF THIS "IMMORTAL".
BUT AFTER LEARNING THE TRICKS I FOUND THAT THE WAY OF TAIPING IS JUST A SHELL. SOMETHING MORE COMPLEX LURKS WITHIN.
NO NEED. HE WON'T ANSWER AT THIS TIME.
TA
CAN HE BE THAT BUSY?
WU LING, A LETTER TO THE EASTERN REGION WON'T REACH HIM.

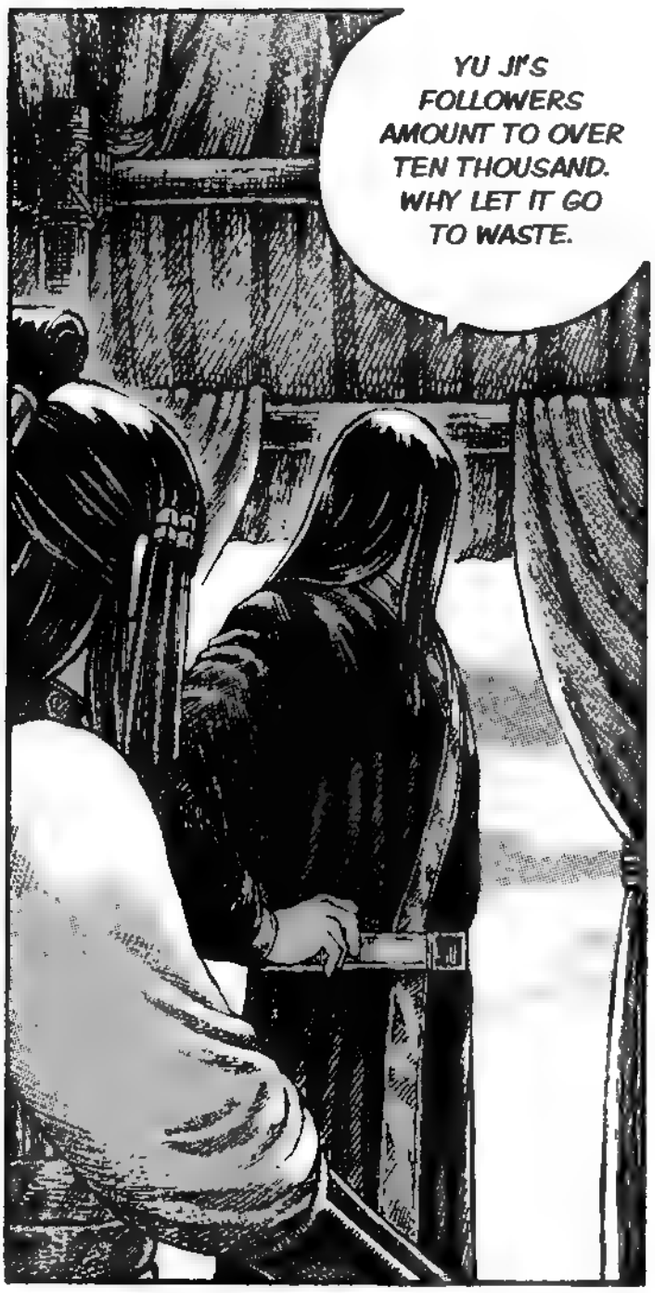
SEND TO JIANGXIA IF YOU MUST.

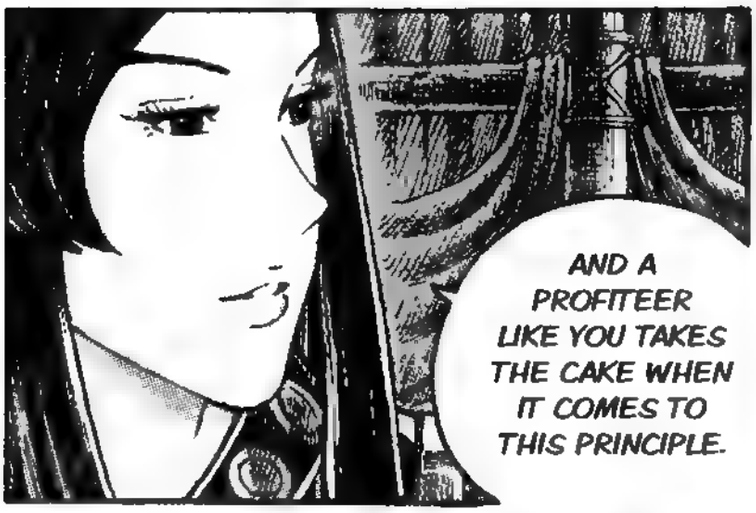
ZHOU.
YES-SIR.


OH, YOU MEAN HE'S ALREADY AT JIANGXIA?


AFTER THE SPY RETURNS AND CONFIRMS THAT YUAN SHAO'S FORCE AT SHEQUAN HAS BEEN TRANSFERRED, WE'LL SET OUT IMMEDIATELY.
YESSIR. I'LL NOTIFY GENERAL CAO REN RIGHT AWAY.

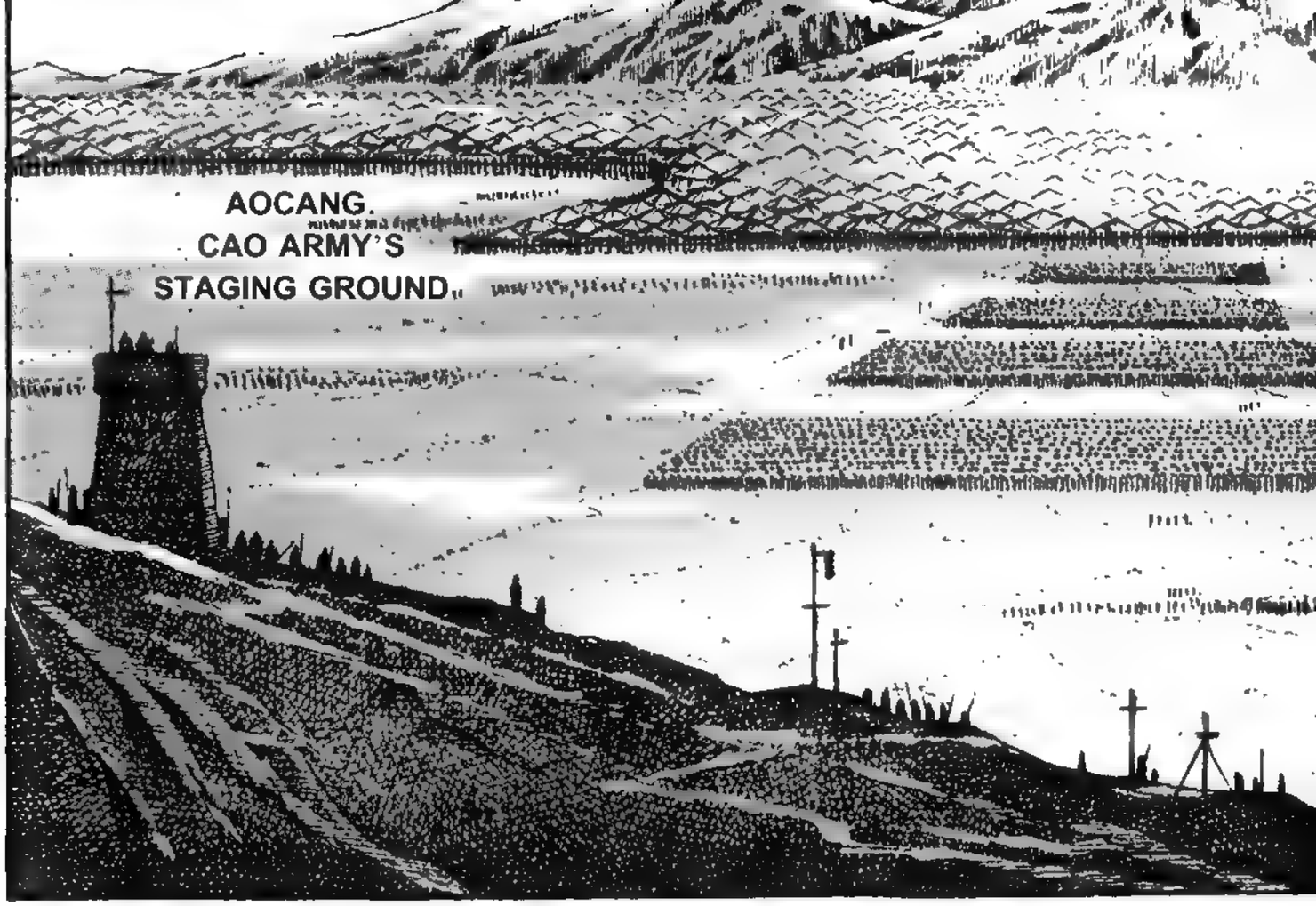

PEOPLE ARE ALL ABOUT SELF-INTEREST THESE DAYS.
TAKE RISKS TO ACHIEVE GOALS. AND I...

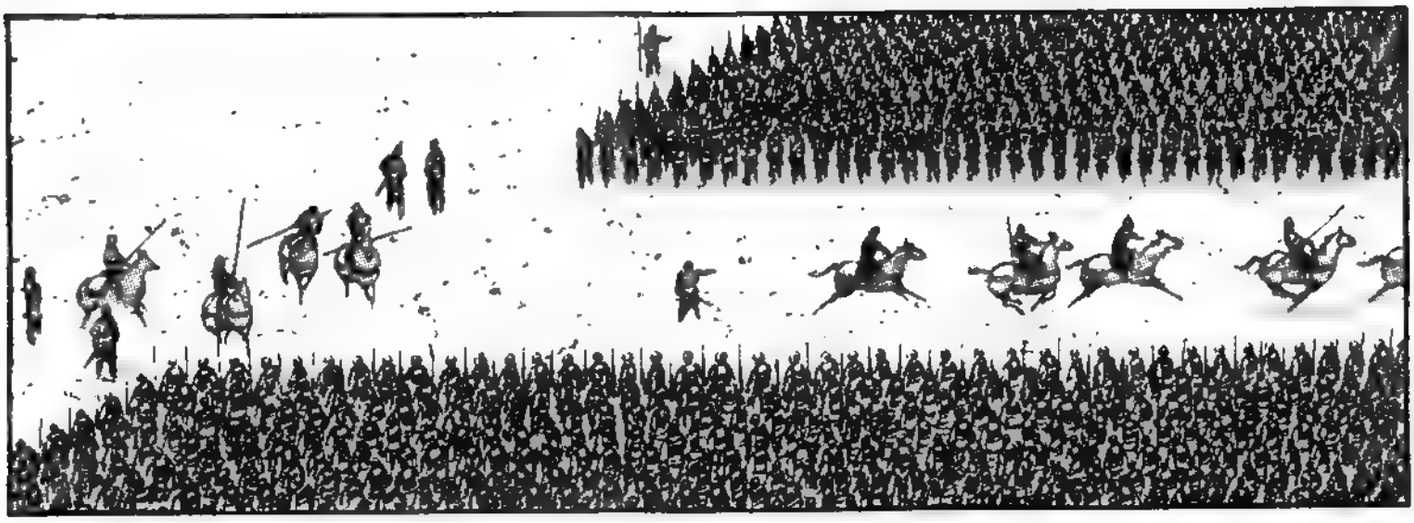

YU JI'S FOLLOWERS AMOUNT TO OVER TEN THOUSAND. WHY LET IT GO TO WASTE.


AND A PROFITEER LIKE YOU TAKES THE CAKE WHEN IT COMES TO THIS PRINCIPLE.

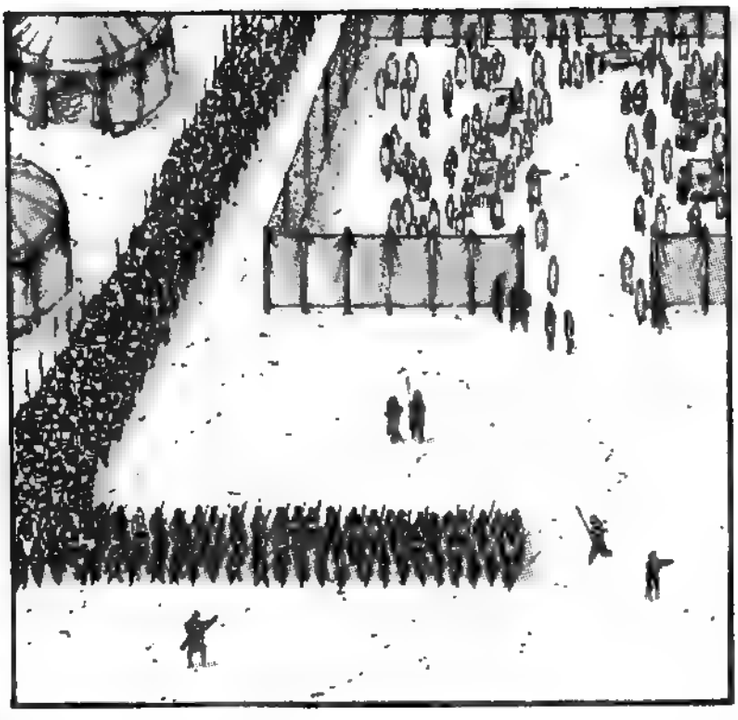
CAO CAO, OF COURSE.

THE SMALL BOATS HAVE BEEN DELIVERED. WHO WILL PAY?

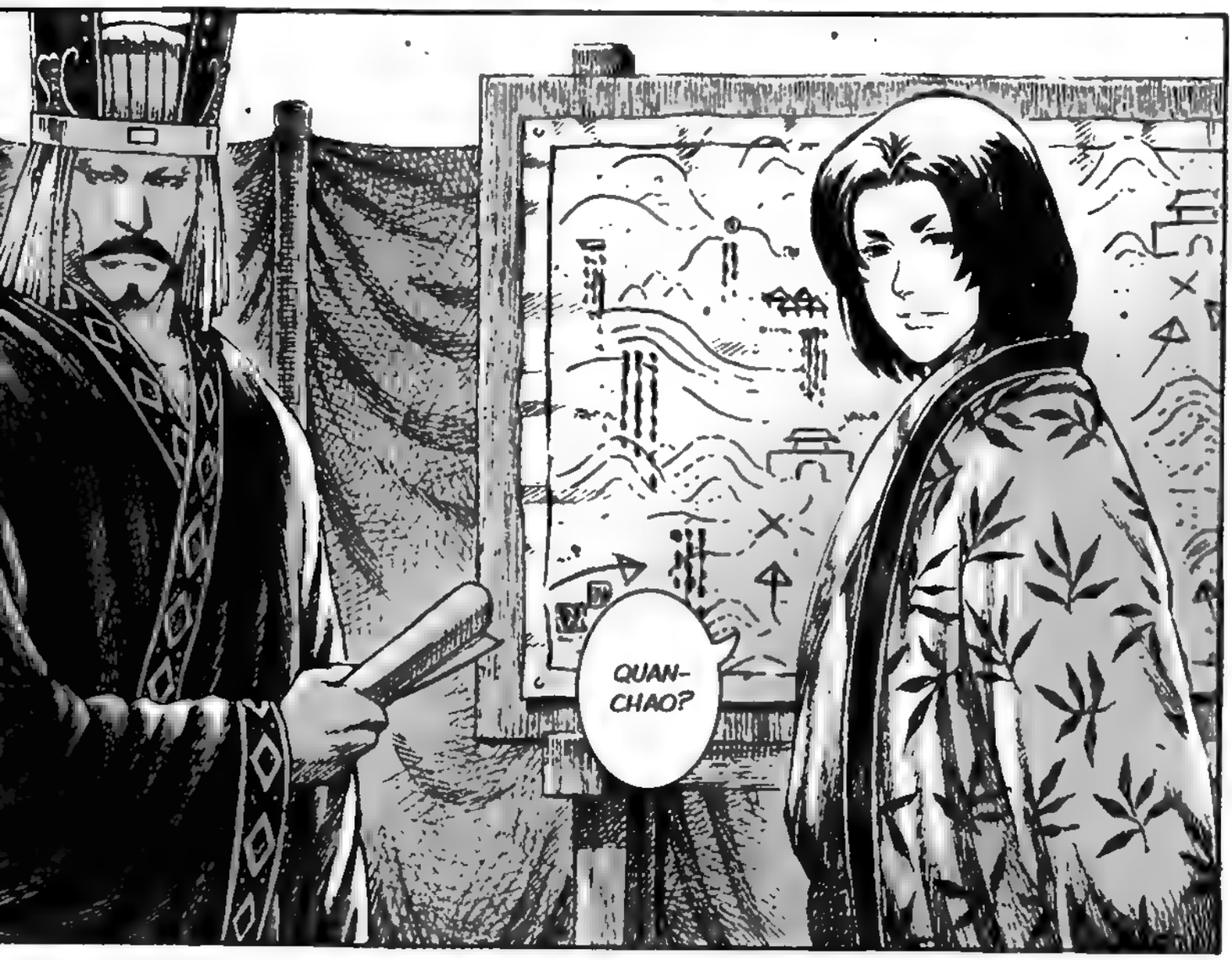

AOCANG.
CAO ARMY'S
STAGING GROUND.



REPORT FROM THE FIFTH BATTALION!



SIR! TWENTY THOUSAND OF YUAN SHAO'S INFANTRY HAS ADVANCED ON QUANCHAO!

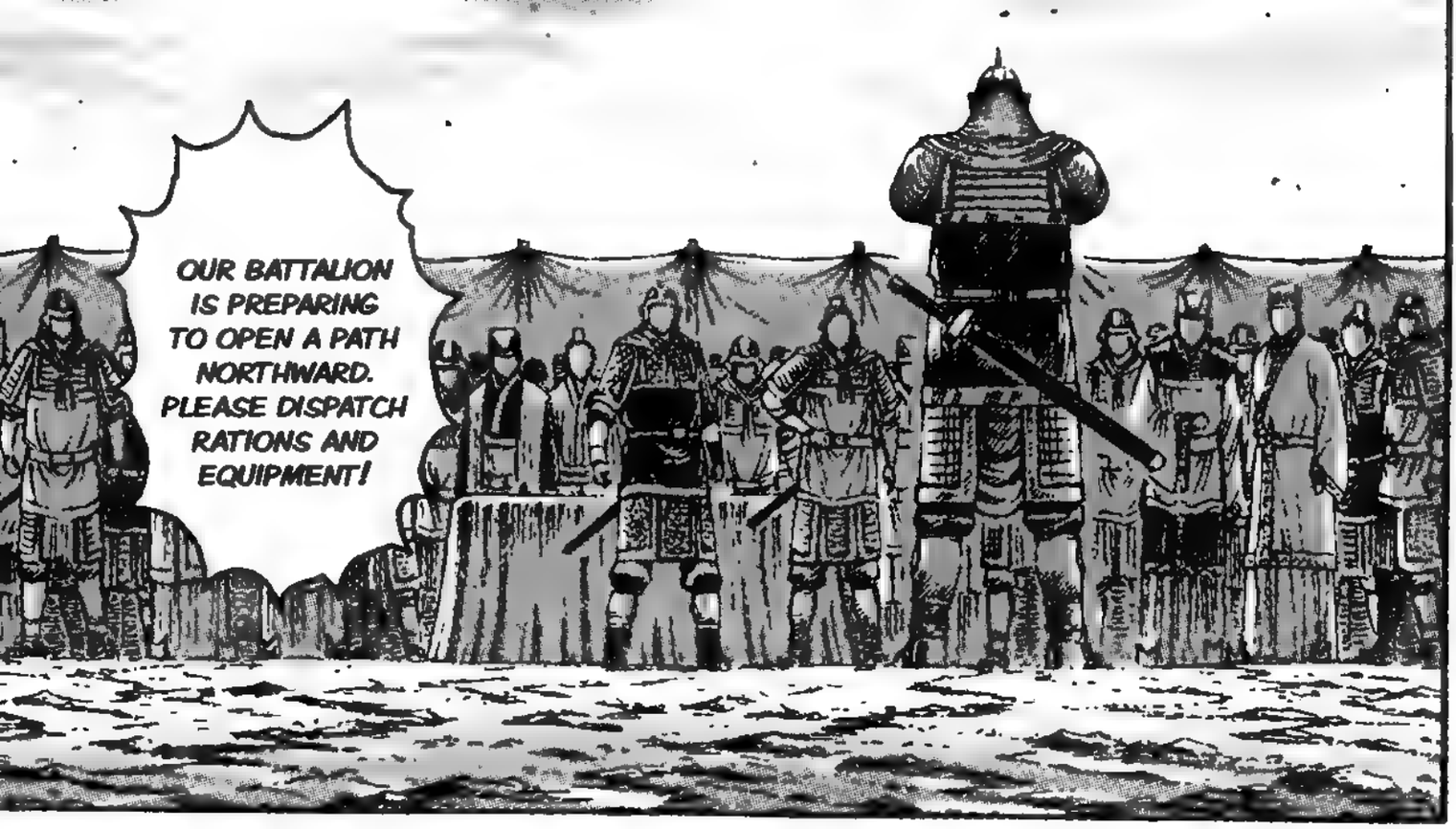

QUAN-CHAO?

YUAN SHAO HAS ALREADY STATIONED A LARGE FORCE AT SHEQUAN. WHY STATION ANOTHER BEHIND IT?
UNLESS THEY WANT TO OPEN A PATH SOUTHWARD?

NO. CAO REN'S ARMY HAS CROSSED THE RIVER AT NIGHT AND TOOK CONTROL OF SHEQUAN!

YUAN SHAO'S DEFENDING GENERAL SUI GU HAS BEEN KILLED!

MY MASTER XIAHOU DUN HAS LED REIN-FORCEMENTS THERE!


OUR BATTALION IS PREPARING TO OPEN A PATH NORTHWARD. PLEASE DISPATCH RATIONS AND EQUIPMENT!

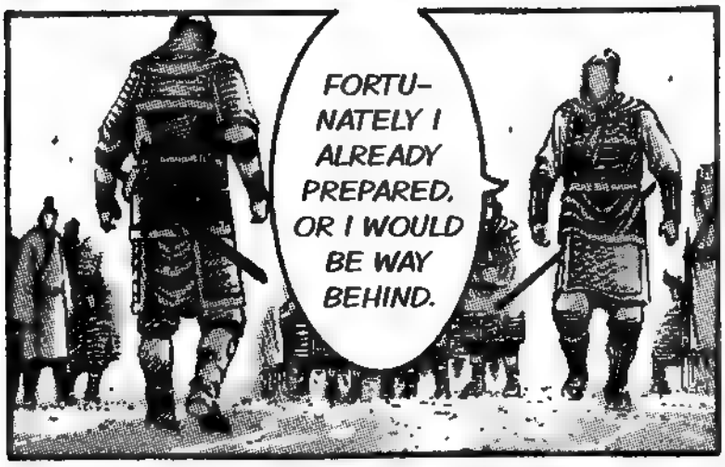
GOODNESS. HE ALREADY PREPARED BOATS.

TOOK... TOOK CONTROL OF SHEQUAN.
THAT'S FAST. THE MESSENGER HASN'T EVEN ARRIVED YET.

LI DIAN.
HERE.

SIR!

YES-SIR!


FORTU-NATELY I ALREADY PREPARED, OR I WOULD BE WAY BEHIND.

CAO REN AND XIAHOU DUN HAVE CROSSED THE RIVER. BE CAUTIOUS WHEN DELIVERING RATIONS AND SUPPLIES.

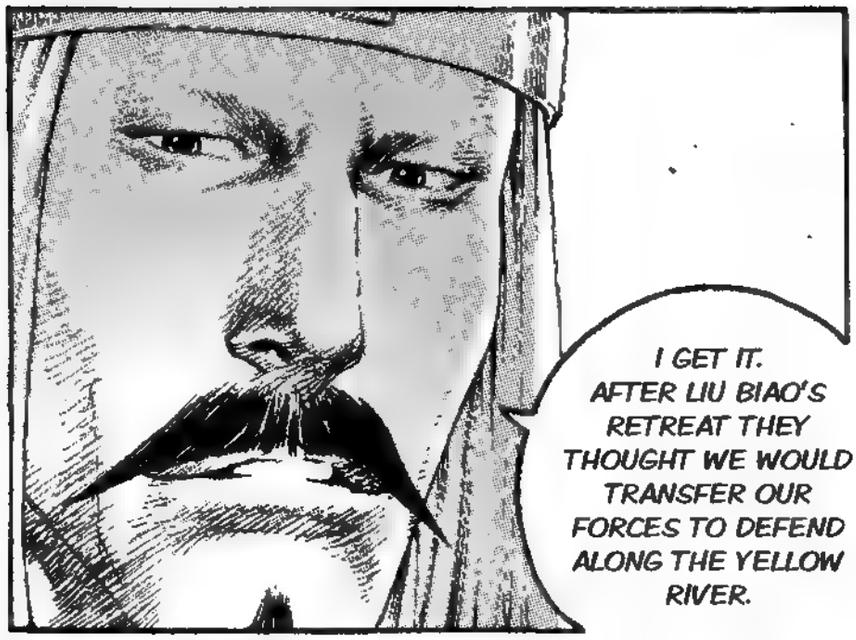
YESSIR!
YOUR MASTER DID WELL. OUR ARMY HAS ACQUIRED THE RIGHT LOCATION FIRST.

YESSIR... I'LL REPORT BACK IMME-DIATELY!
RATIONS OFFICER. COME WITH ME!

GO REPORT TO CAO REN THAT I'LL BRING SUPPLIES SOON.

UNLESS THE MAIN FORCE WAS SUDDENLY DIVERTED.

SHEQUAN HAD A STRONG DEPLOYMENT. HOW COULD CAO REN TAKE IT SO EASILY?


I GET IT. AFTER LIU BIAO'S RETREAT THEY THOUGHT WE WOULD TRANSFER OUR FORCES TO DEFEND ALONG THE YELLOW RIVER.

CORRECT. YUAN SHAO NOTICED THAT LIU BIAO RETREATED BACK TO JINGZHOU INSTEAD OF JOINING FORCES WITH HIM TO ATTACK US.

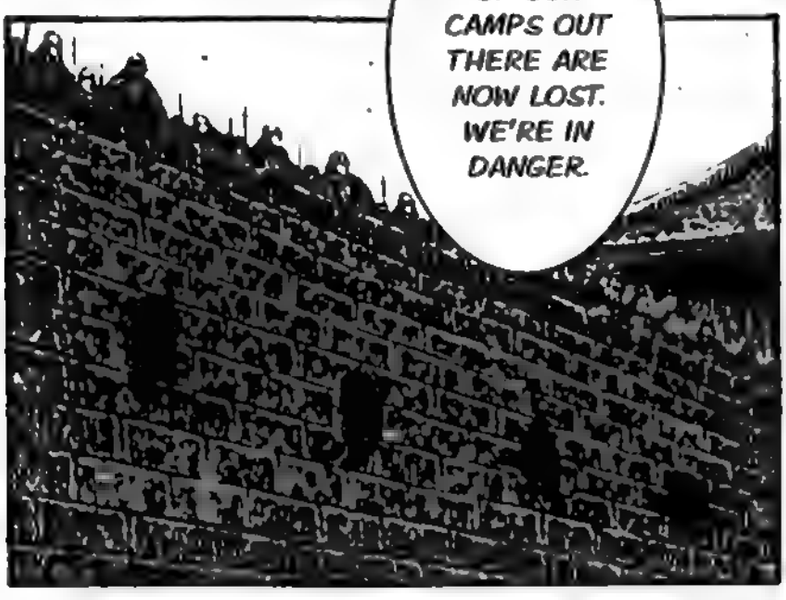
SO. THAT BOY SUN CE HAS MADE HIS MOVE.

LIU BIAO'S RETREAT MEANS SOMETHING HAS GONE WRONG AT JIANGXIA.

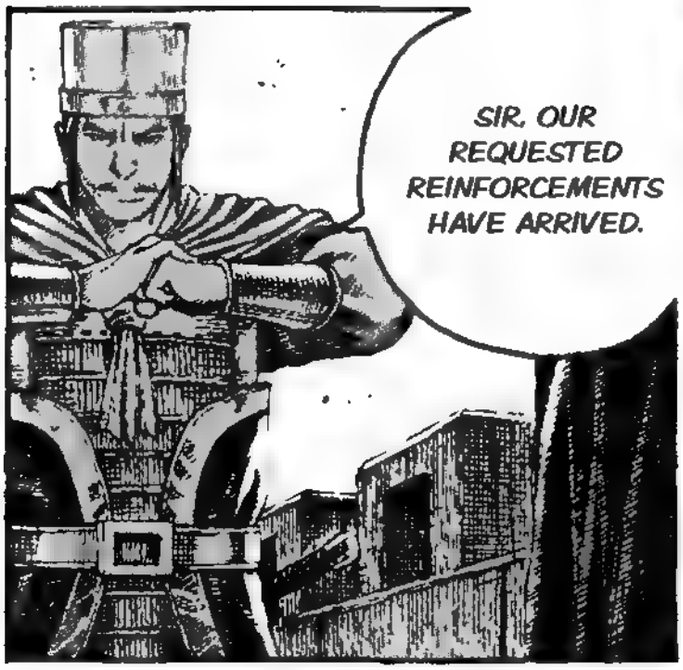
BEING ABLE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THAT MOMENT OF MILITARY REDEPLOYMENT. THAT DECISION MAKER SURE IS WORTHY OF PRAISE.
LITTLE CONQUEROR MIGHT BE POWERFUL, BUT OUR MILITARY PRECISION BEATS HIS.
AS MILITARY ADVISORS YOU ALL MUST WORK HARDER.
OR SIMA YI WILL TAKE THE CREDIT AGAIN.

噔
*SFX: ARMY MOVING
TEN THOU-SAND.
TWENTY THOU-SAND.
MORE NOW.

SHAXIAN
LIU BIAO'S
TERRITORY


MANY OF OUR CAMPS OUT THERE ARE NOW LOST. WE'RE IN DANGER.

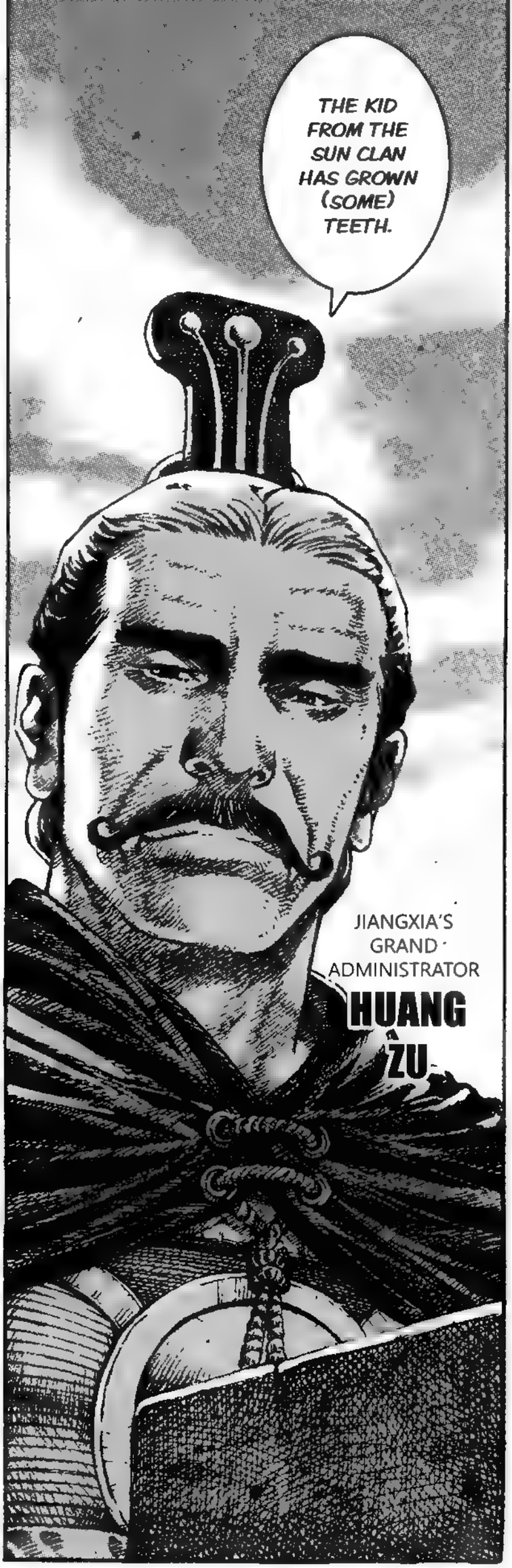
WE MISCAL-CULATED!


SIR. OUR REQUESTED REINFORCEMENTS HAVE ARRIVED.

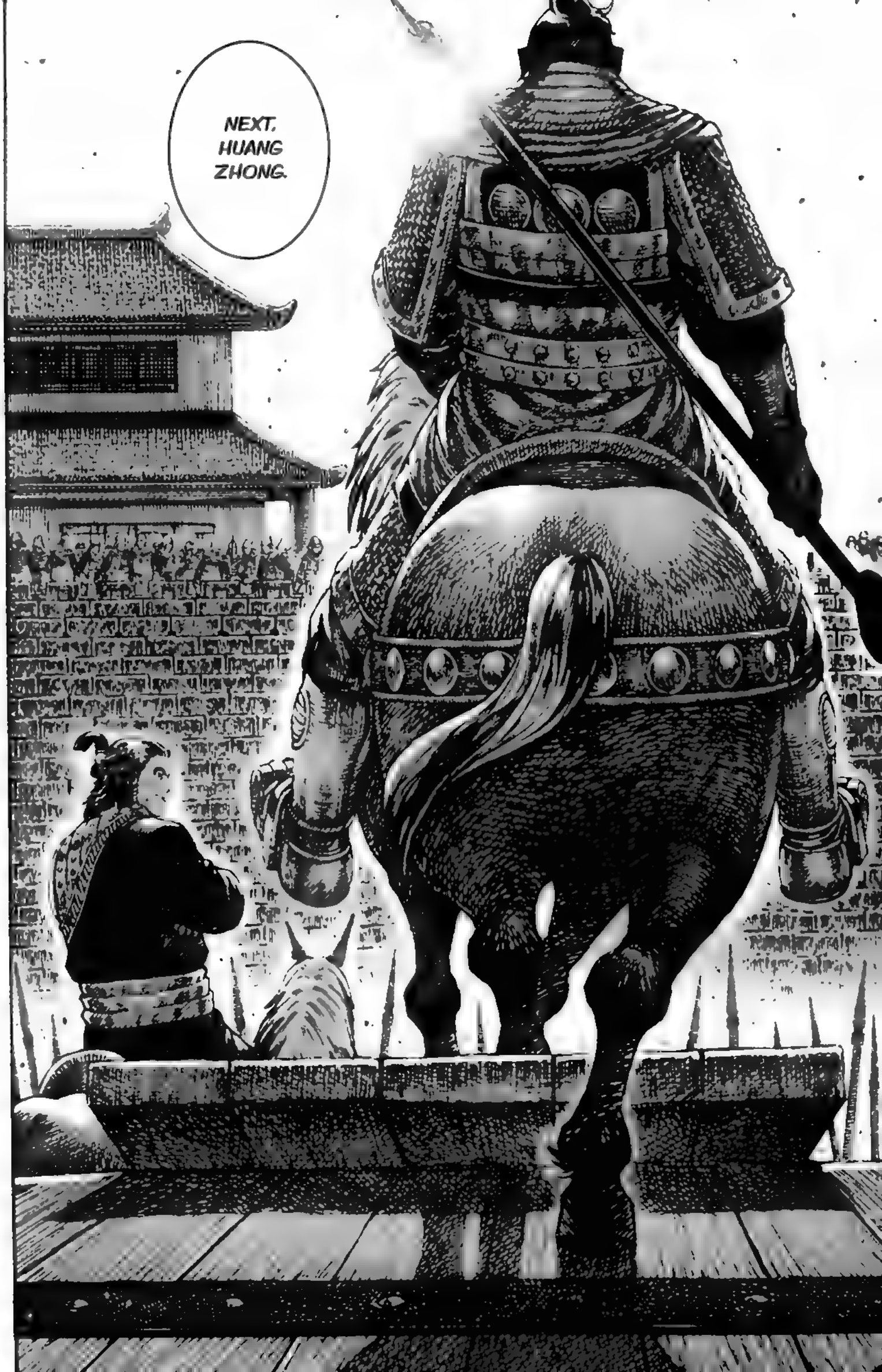
YOUNG AND RECKLESS. THOSE CONSECUTIVE VICTORIES MUST HAVE JADED SUN CE. HE WILL UNDERESTIMATE US.

IT WOULD BE BEST TO HAVE COMMANDERS WHO ARE NOT WELL-KNOWN.

THIS BATTLE WILL TEST THEIR HUBRIS. TO MAKE SURE SUN CE DOESN'T TAKE CAUTION.

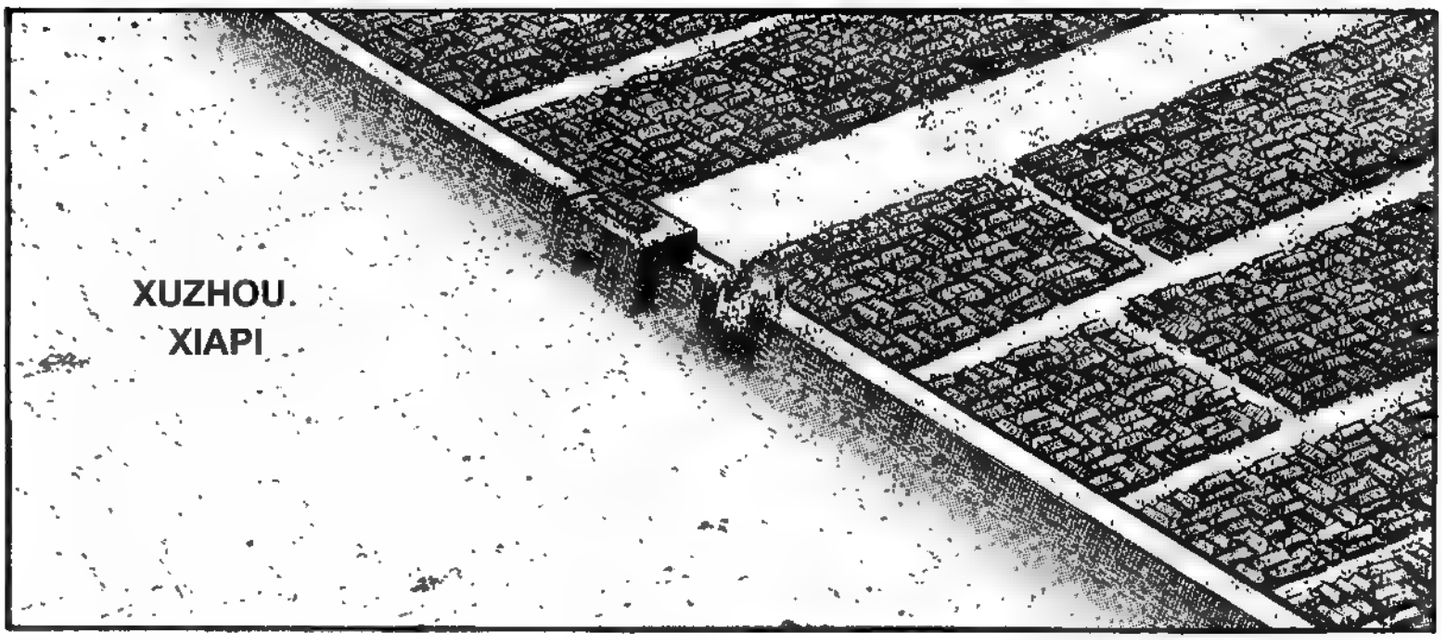

THE KID FROM THE SUN CLAN HAS GROWN (SOME) TEETH.
JIANGXIA'S GRAND ADMINISTRATOR
HUANG ÂZU

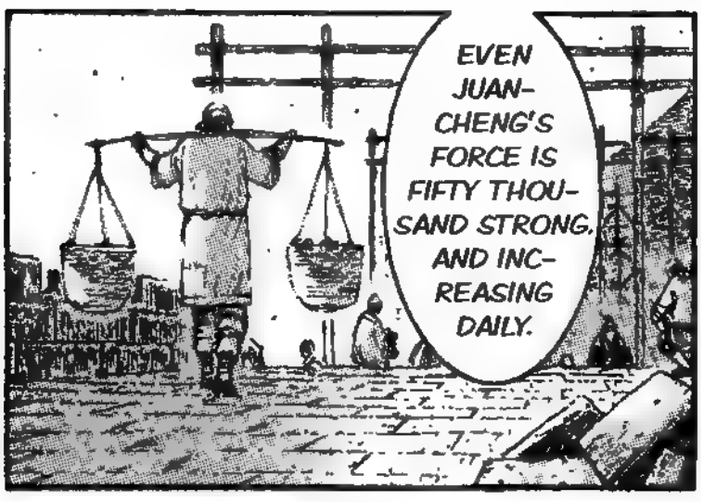
FIRST, GAN NING.
AND YET, THEY MUST BE THE MOST SKILLED.


NEXT, HUANG ZHONG.

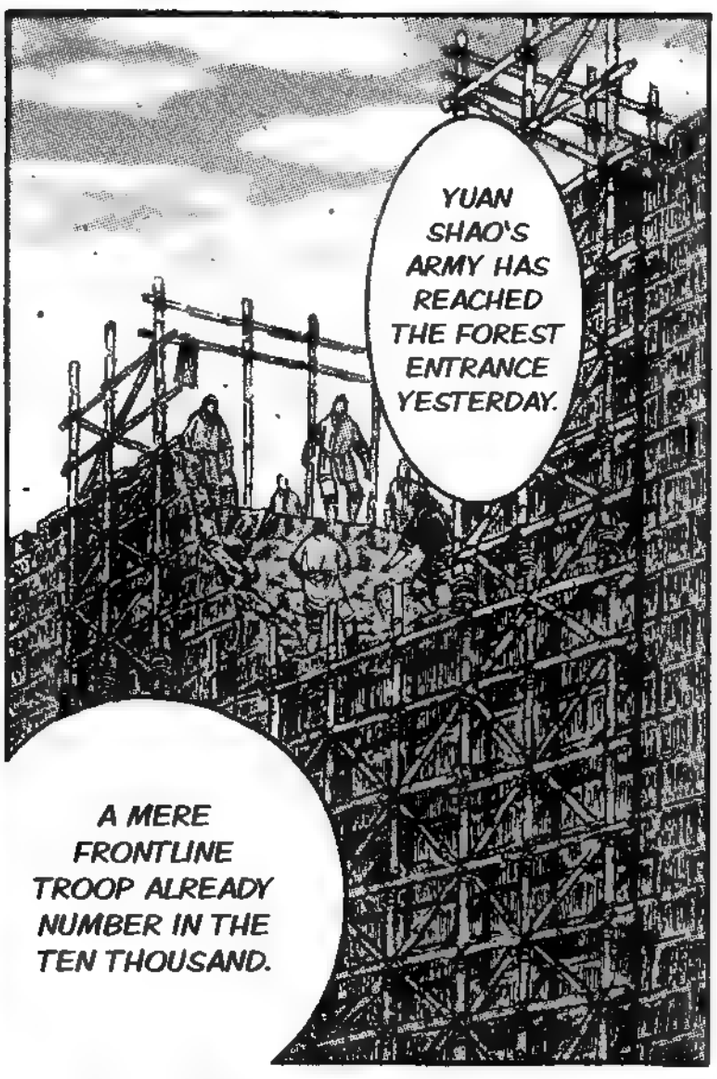
COMMANDER, GENERAL, OR A SOLDIER?
(OR "CHIEF, OFFICER, OR PAWN")

HEROES ONLY HOPE FOR RECOGNITION

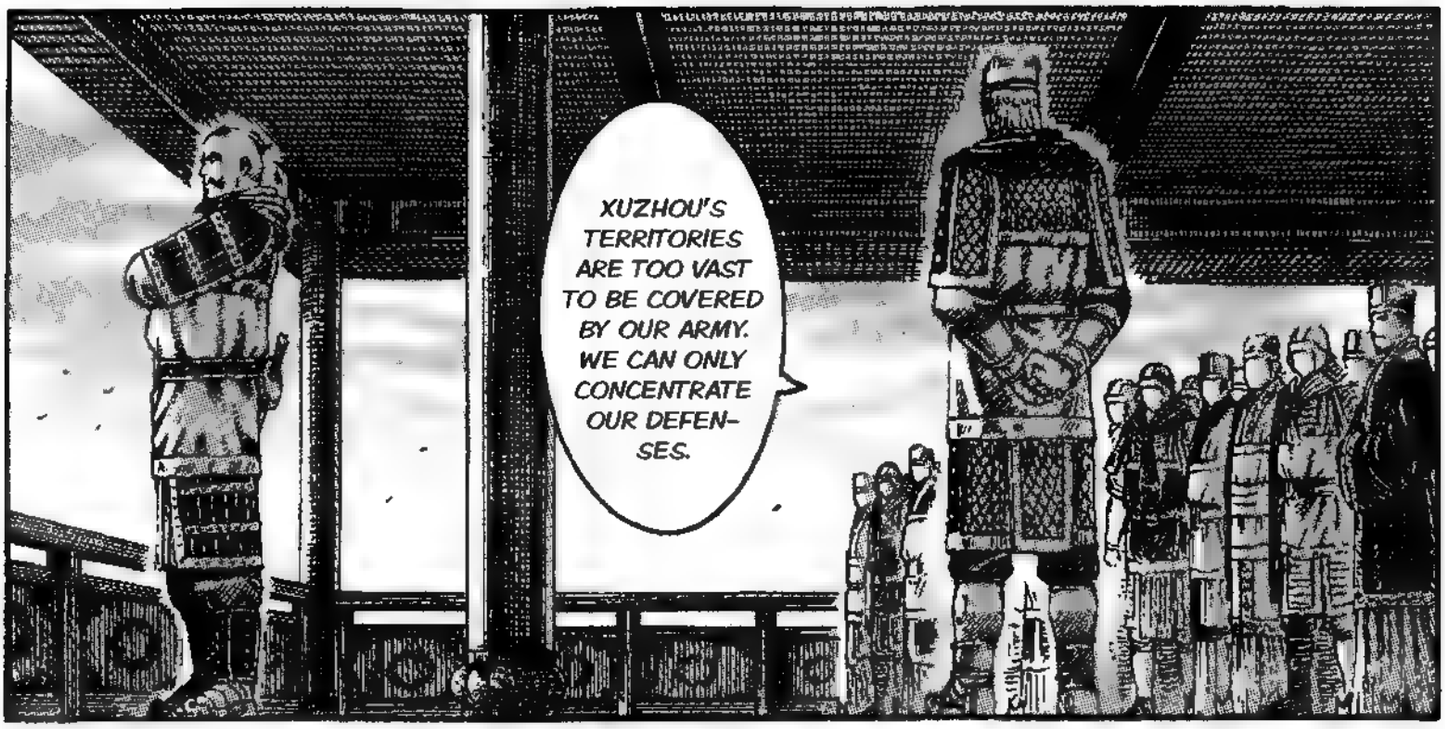

XUZHOU.
XIAPI


EVEN JUAN-CHENG'S FORCE IS FIFTY THOU-SAND STRONG, AND INC-REASING DAILY.

LOOKS LIKE THOSE WHO WERE FIGHTING GONGSUN ZAN HAVE ALL RE-TURNED.


YUAN SHAO'S ARMY HAS REACHED THE FOREST ENTRANCE YESTERDAY.
A MERE FRONTLINE TROOP ALREADY NUMBER IN THE TEN THOUSAND.

CHAPTER 272 UNYIELDING

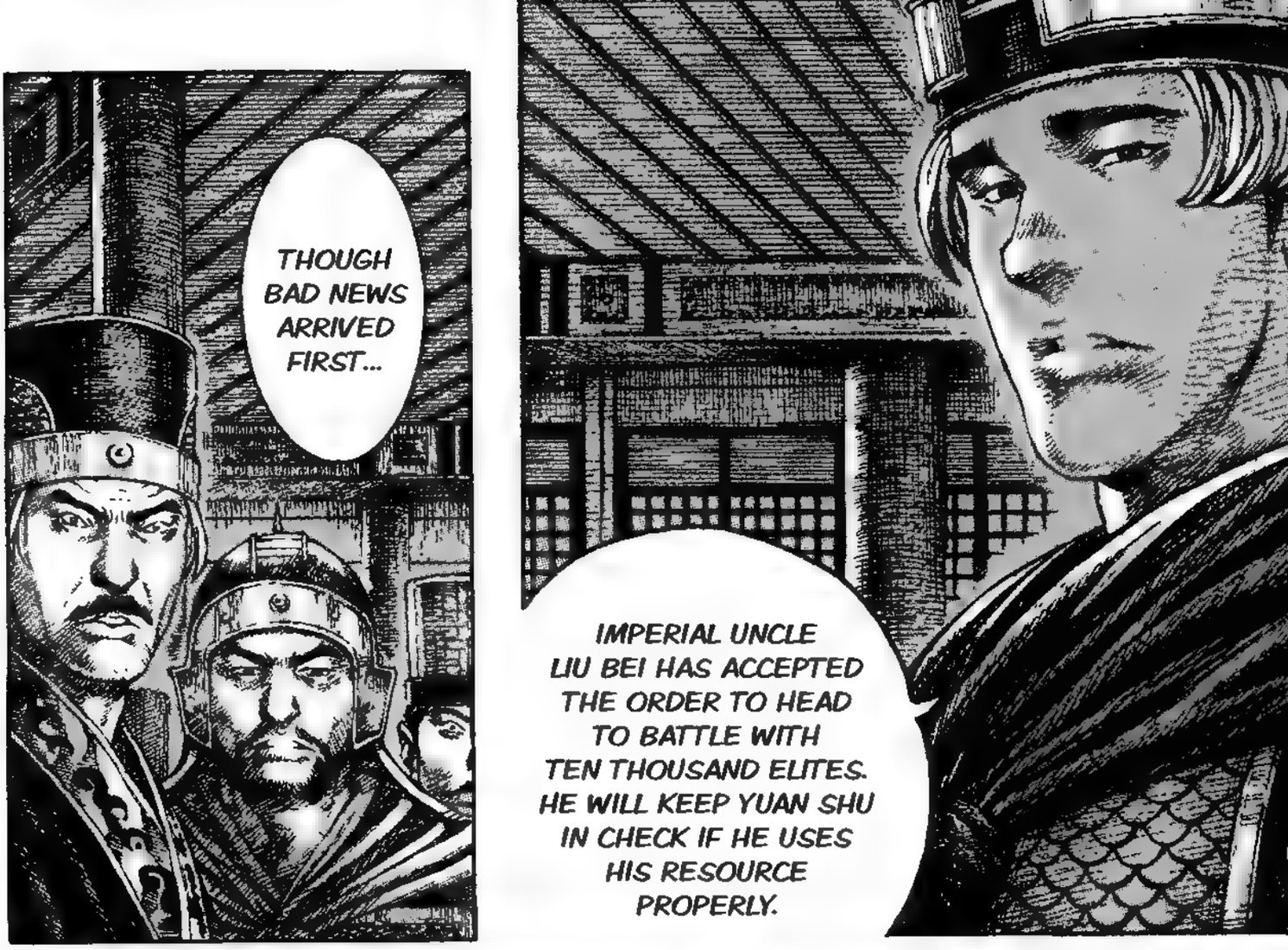

XUZHOU'S TERRITORIES ARE TOO VAST TO BE COVERED BY OUR ARMY. WE CAN ONLY CONCENTRATE OUR DEFENSES.

THIS WAY THE YUAN ARMY WILL HAVE TO LEAVE BEHIND SOME MEN TO HOLD THOSE LOCATIONS. AND WE CAN ALSO PROTECT THE IMPORTANT CITIES OF XUZHOU.

MY ARMY HAS SYSTEMATICALLY PULLED OUT OF THE STAGING GROUNDS AND GATHERED AT XIAPI FOR THE SHOWDOWN.
GENERAL OF THE HIDDEN WAVES
CHEN DENG

I'M ONLY CONCERNED ABOUT THAT OTHER ARMY.

AS LONG AS WE FOLLOW ADVISOR GUO'S PLAN, YUAN SHAO WILL ADVANCE NO FURTHER THAN XIAPI.


THOUGH BAD NEWS ARRIVED FIRST...
IMPERIAL UNCLE LIU BEI HAS ACCEPTED THE ORDER TO HEAD TO BATTLE WITH TEN THOUSAND ELITES. HE WILL KEEP YUAN SHU IN CHECK IF HE USES HIS RESOURCE PROPERLY.

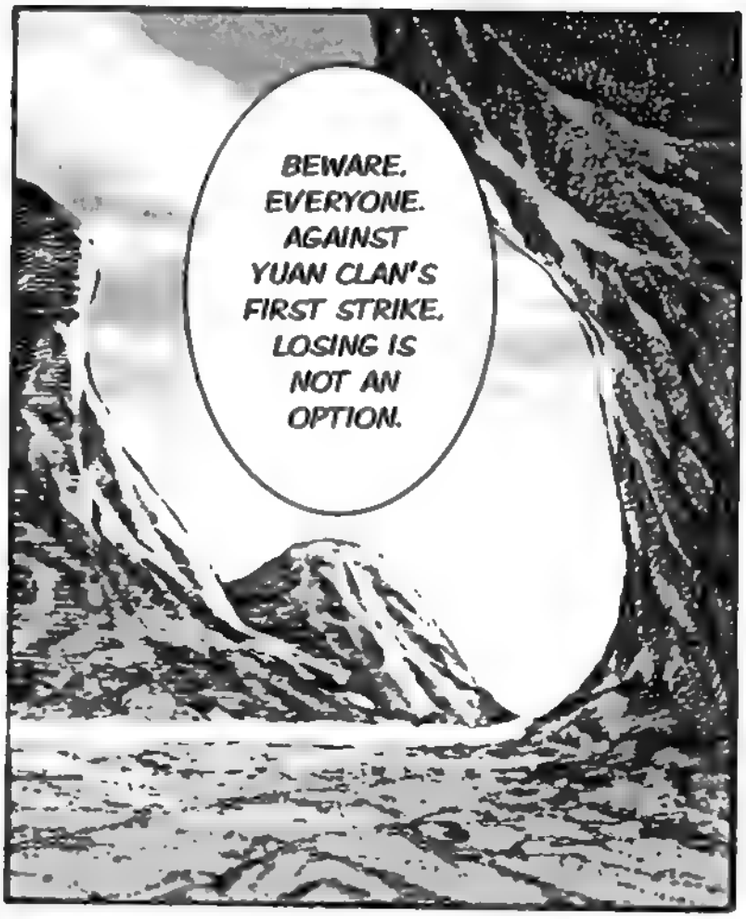
YUAN CLAN'S QINGZHOU DIVISION WAS VICTORIOUS FIRST. ONE BY ONE THE WARLORDS UP NORTH HAVE LOST TO THEM.

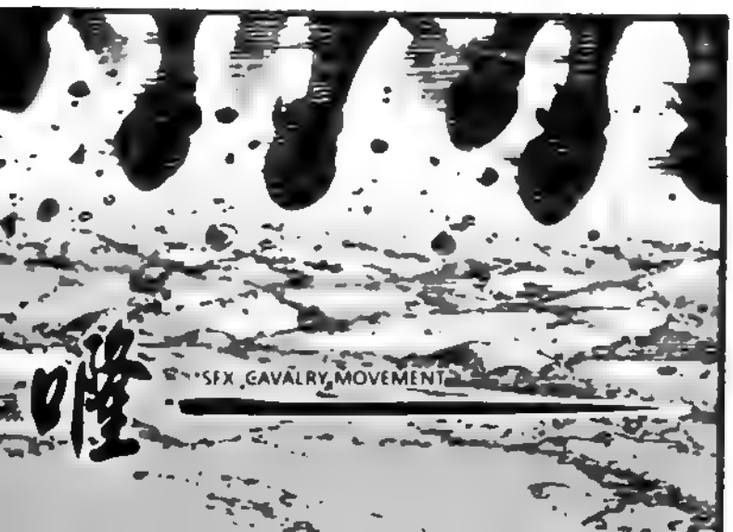
RIGHT. THEIR PRECISE DEPLOY-MENT AND SPEEDY PACE WAS TOO HARD TO PREPARE AGAINST.

THEY COULDN'T RETREAT FAST ENOUGH?

I THINK THE ONE IN CHARGE MUST BE ONE OF THEIR FAMOUS COMMAN-DERS...

AND HIS TROOP MUST BE THE BEST CAVALRY IN THE YUAN CLAN!


BEWARE, EVERYONE. AGAINST YUAN CLAN'S FIRST STRIKE, LOSING IS NOT AN OPTION.


SFX: CAVALRY MOVEMENT

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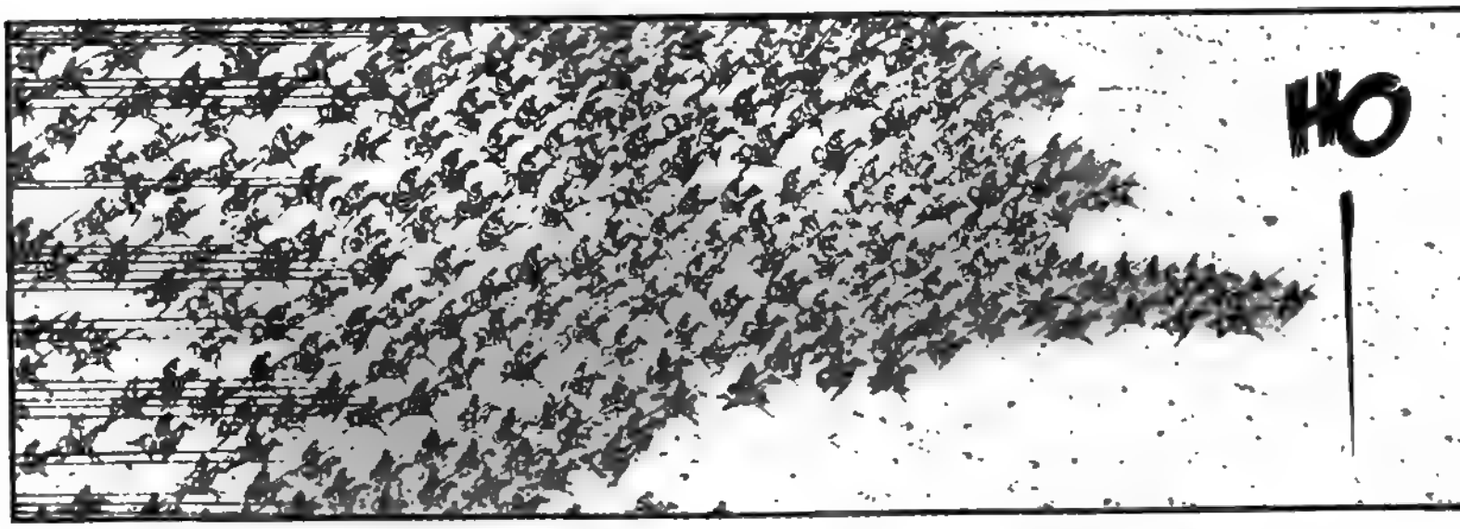
*SFX: CAVALRY MOVEMENT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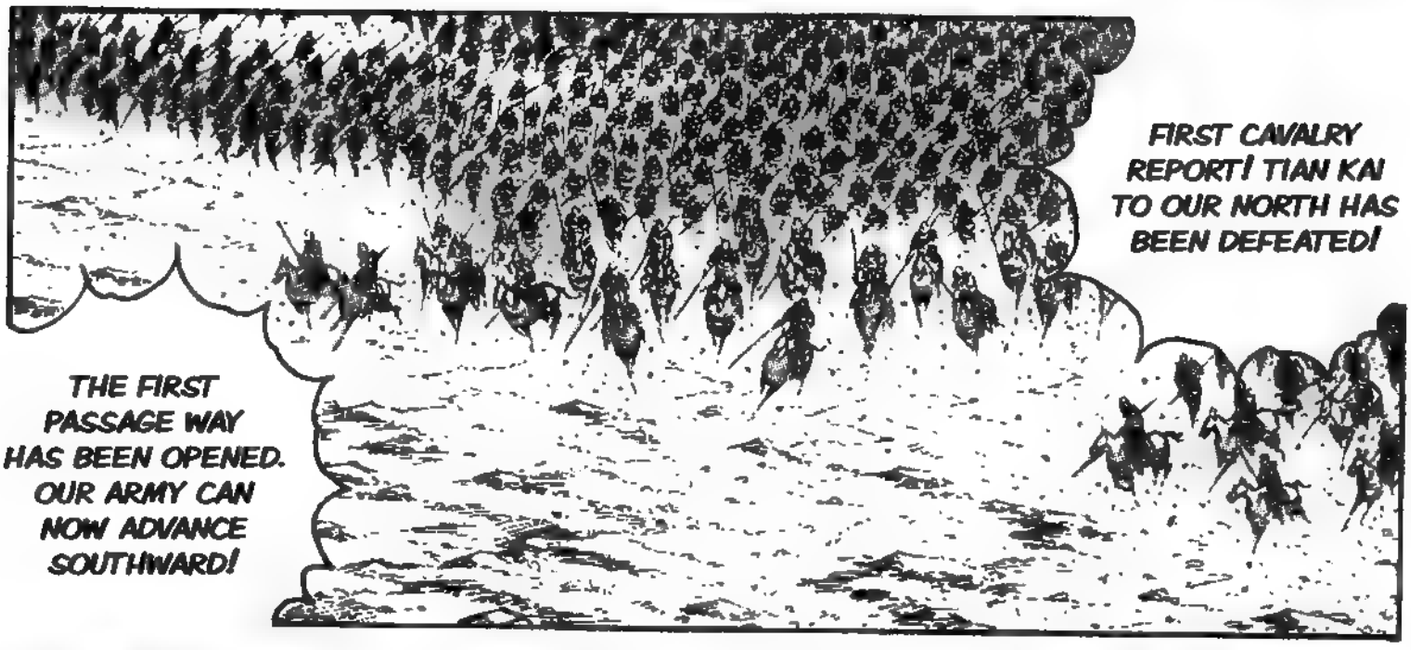
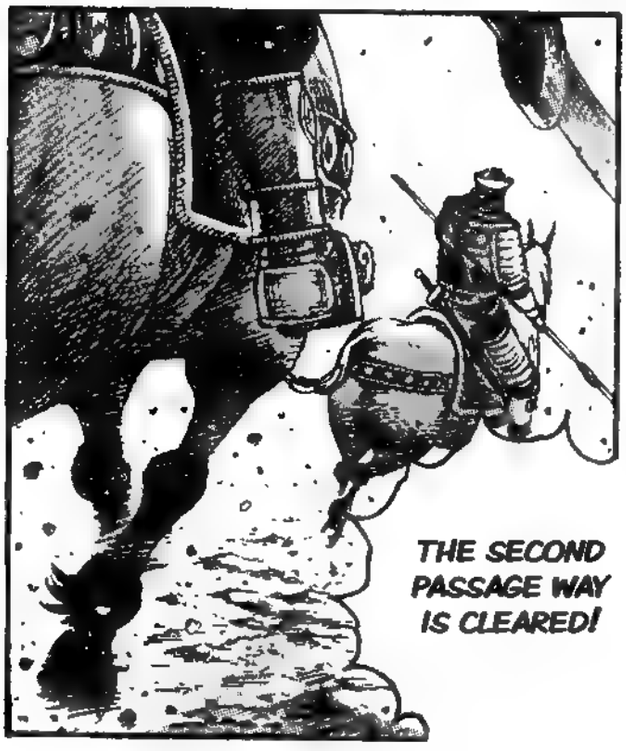

FIRST CAVALRY REPORT! TIAN KAI TO OUR NORTH HAS BEEN DEFEATED!
THE FIRST PASSAGE WAY HAS BEEN OPENED. OUR ARMY CAN NOW ADVANCE SOUTHWARD!


THE SECOND PASSAGE WAY IS CLEARED!

SECOND CAVALRY REPORT! KONG RONG TO OUR EAST HAS BEEN DEFEATED!

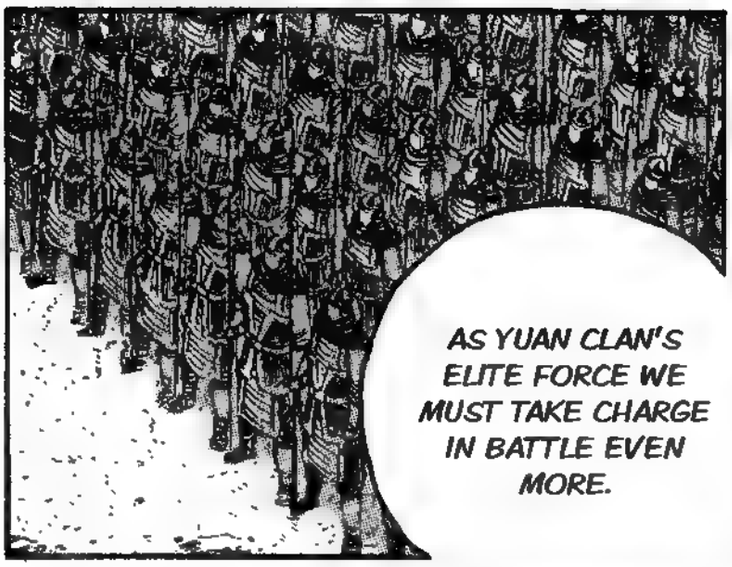
HAN JIANG
QIAO SONG
JIAN QIU
AT YOUR SERVICE, YOUNG MASTER!
ZHANG YI
YUAN SHAO'S COMMANDER WHO CONQUERS THE SOUTH
CHUNYU QIONG

THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR HARD WORK.

YUAN CLAN S CHIEF CONTROLLER OF THE SOUTHERN CONQUERING FORCE, YUAN SHAO'S ELDEST SON
YUAN TAN
TWO EASTERN KINGDOMS IN TWO DAYS.

THE BRAVERY YOU ALL DISPLAYED HAS OVERSHADOWED THE HUMILIATION THAT WAS THE UNINTENTIONAL LOST OF SHEQUAN.

WITH THIS SWEEPING VICTORY OUR MOMENTUM IS UNSTOPPABLE. ALL THE NEARBY WARLORDS HAVE SUBMITTED TO US.


AS YUAN CLAN'S ELITE FORCE WE MUST TAKE CHARGE IN BATTLE EVEN MORE.

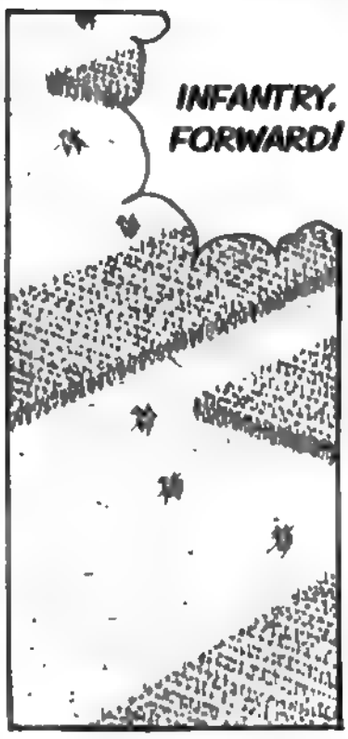
LET'S GO. THE ENTIRE YUAN CLAN IS WATCHING.

IF WE TAKE XUZHOU WE'LL HAVE CAO CAO FIRMLY LOCKED IN PLACE.

EVERYONE, FORWARD!

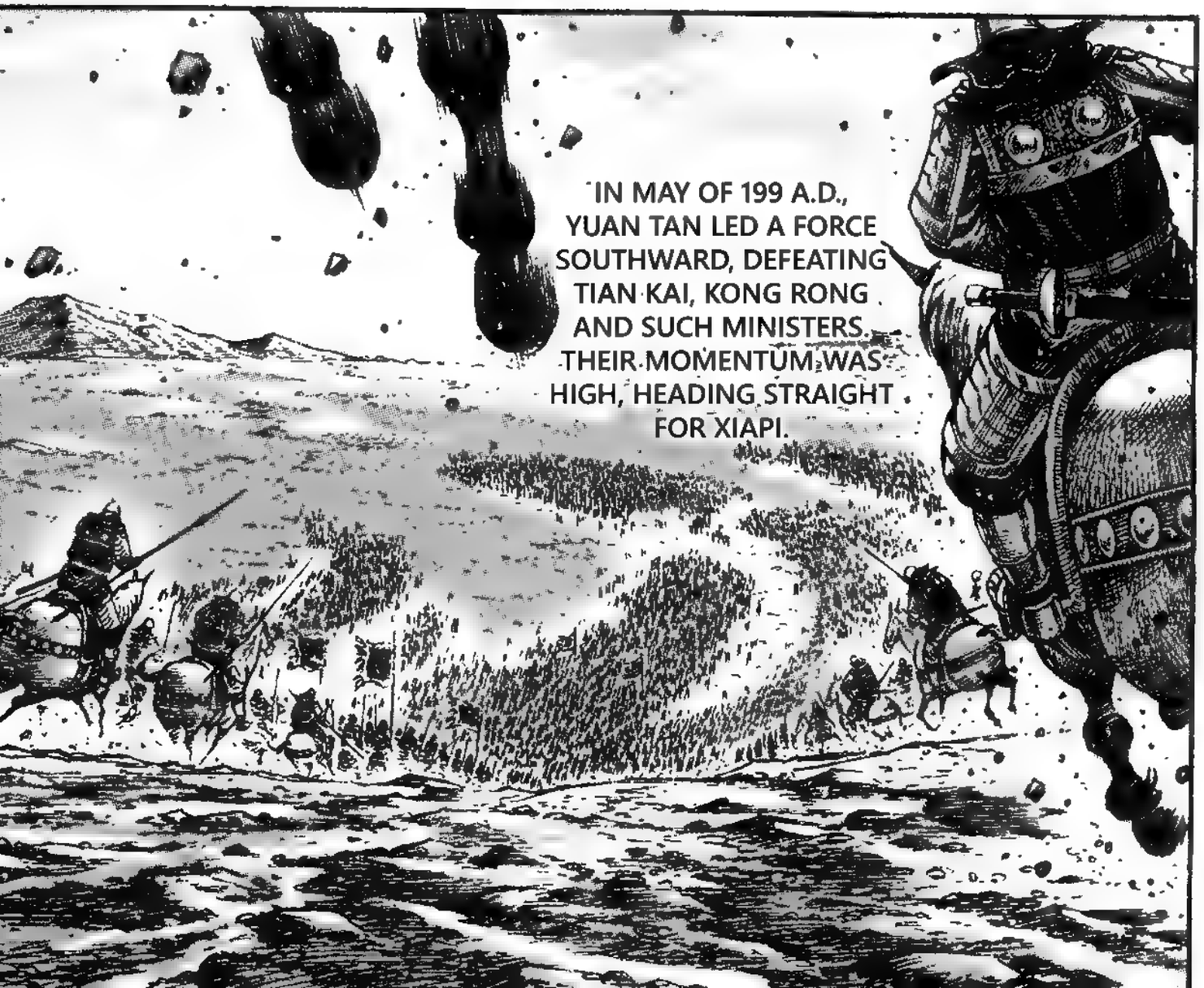
HO

MAIN CAVALRY. FORWARD!

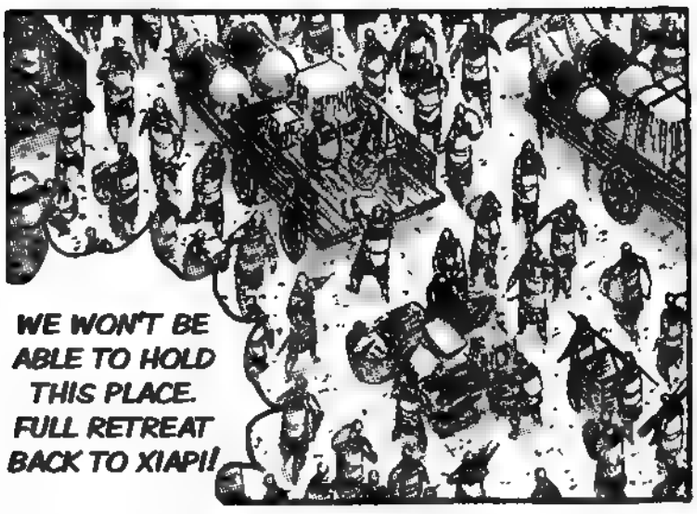

INFANTRY. FORWARD!

LADY ZHEN... IS ALSO WATCHING.

TARGET... XIAPI!


IN MAY OF 199 A.D., YUAN TAN LED A FORCE SOUTHWARD, DEFEATING TIAN KAI, KONG RONG AND SUCH MINISTERS. THEIR MOMENTUM WAS HIGH, HEADING STRAIGHT FOR XIAPI.

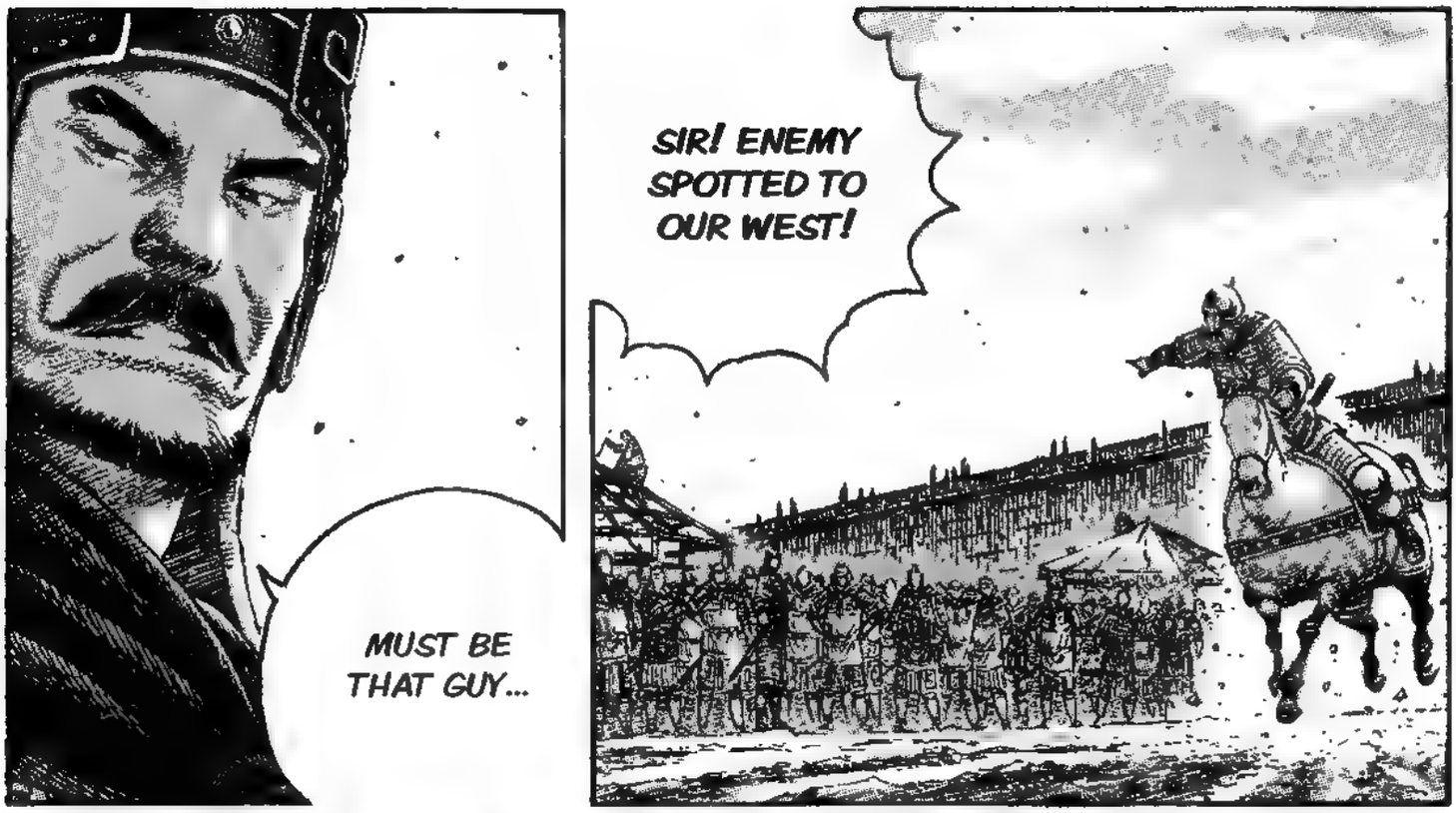
OUTSKIRTS OF XIAPI,
CAO CAMP


WE WON'T BE ABLE TO HOLD THIS PLACE. FULL RETREAT BACK TO XIAPI!

WE MUST HURRY! HURRY!

YUAN SHAO'S ARMY CAME FASTER THAN PREDICTED. PACK UP QUICKLY!

YESSIR. YUAN CLAN'S VANGUARD FORCE AMBUSHED THEM DURING THEIR NIGHTTIME WITHDRAW. THE FIRST CAMP MASTER WAS QUICKLY FINISHED OFF.
OUR FIRST CAMP WAS TAKEN BY SURPRISE?
YES. THEY MUST HAVE DISGUISED THEMSELVES AS CIVILIANS AND LAID IN WAITING AT XUZHOU.
MASTER, IF THE ENEMY CAN MAKE SUCH DEPLOYMENT, THEY MUST HAVE...
THE COMMANDER OF THAT YUAN ARMY IS NO EASY FOE.
OUR MORALE IS REALLY TAKING A HIT THIS TIME.
HUANG SONG IS NO PAPER TIGER TO HAVE MADE IT TO FIRST CAMP MASTER'S POSITION. HE DIED JUST LIKE THAT...


SIR! ENEMY SPOTTED TO OUR WEST!
MUST BE THAT GUY...

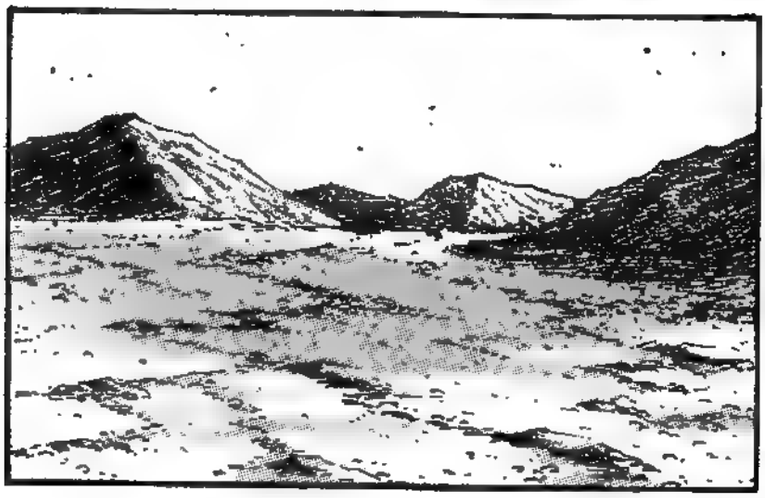
MASTER. THIS MAN TASTED MARROW AND WANTS TO TAKE OUT ANOTHER CAMP. I FEAR THAT HE MAY HAVE BLOCKED OUR RETREAT PATH TOO.

HAVE ALL OF OUR MEN WITHDRAWN FROM THE AREA?

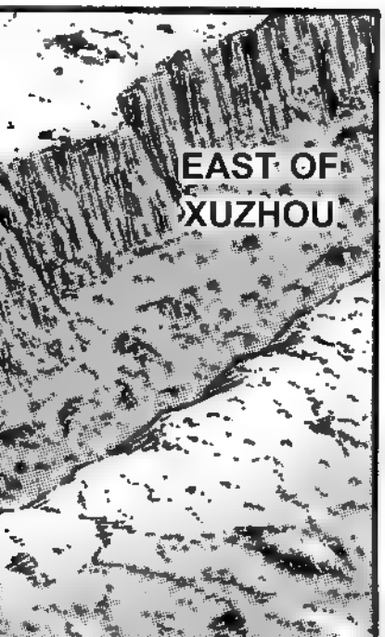
I THINK IF THEY WERE ALREADY IN XUZHOU THEY MUST BE INFANTRY. SO THEY CAN'T MOVE VERY FAST.
WE'LL MAKE IT BACK IF WE GO AROUND THE EAST ROUTE.

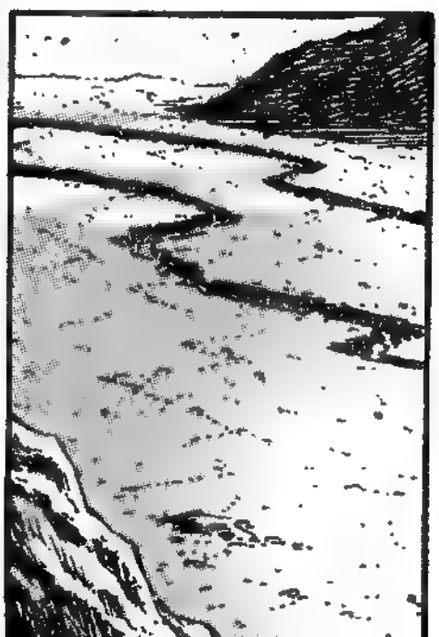
THE ONLY ONE LEFT IS THAT GUY AT THE MASS GRAVES...

YOU MEAN THAT FRIEND OF CHEN DENG...?



FORGET IT. CRAZY PERSON DOES CRAZY THINGS. IT'S NOT OUR PROBLEM.

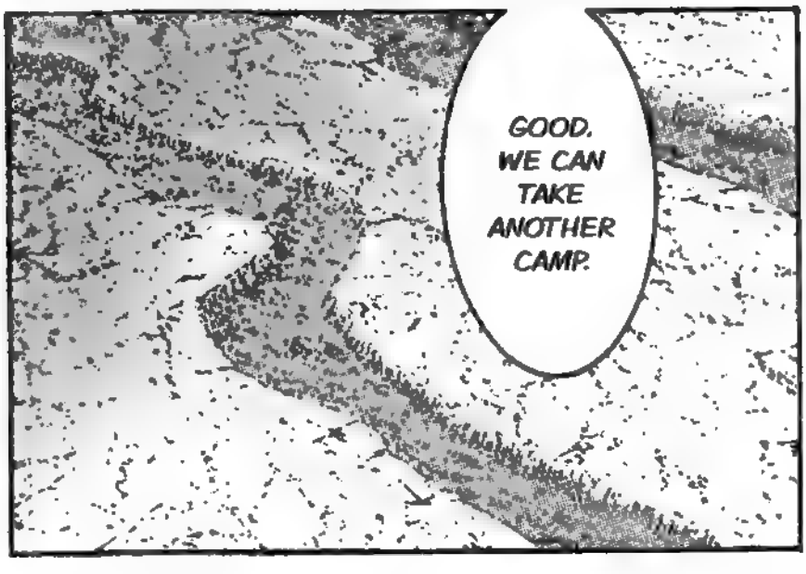

EAST OF XUZHOU



MOUNT OF GRAVES

SIR! WE HAVE PLANTED DECOYS TO THE WEST AND THE ENEMY HAS FELL FOR IT. THEY'RE COMING THIS WAY.

HAVE YOU FOUND A PASS-AGE?


GOOD. WE CAN TAKE ANOTHER CAMP.

FIRST MASTER'S ARMY WILL CATCH UP WITH US SOON. AS THE VANGUARD FORCE WE CAN'T BLOCK HIS PATH.

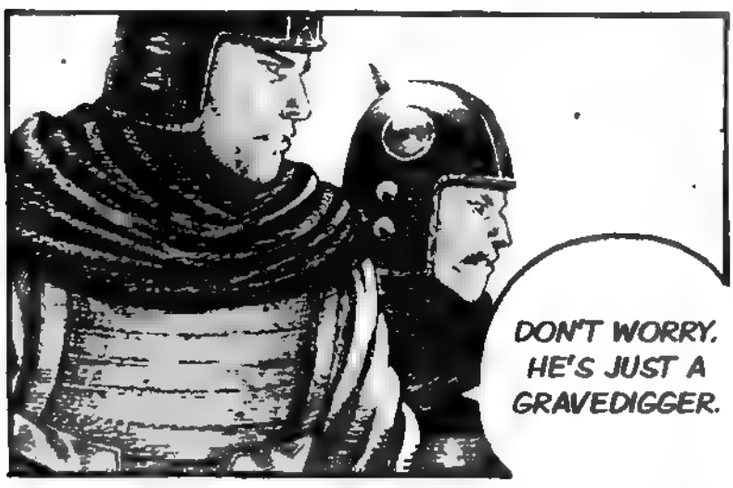
THIS WAY. GENERAL. BOTH MEN AND HORSES CAN PASS THROUGH HERE.

THERE'S SOMEONE DOWN THERE. BE CAREFUL. HE MIGHT BE A SCOUT.

WAIT. A PERS-ON!

HALT!

HAL...


DON'T WORRY. HE'S JUST A GRAVEDIGGER.

YOU'RE TOO EARLY, GRAVEDIGGER. A FEW DAYS LATER THERE WILL BE SOME TEN THOUSAND MORE HERE.
MORE FOR YOU TO STEAL FROM.
TA
SUCH A STRONG KILLING AURA..
GEN-ERAL

HOLD ON THERE, BOY.
GENERAL OF THE FRONT WHO CONQUERS THE SOUTH
HE ZHI

FROM DUSK TO DAWN.

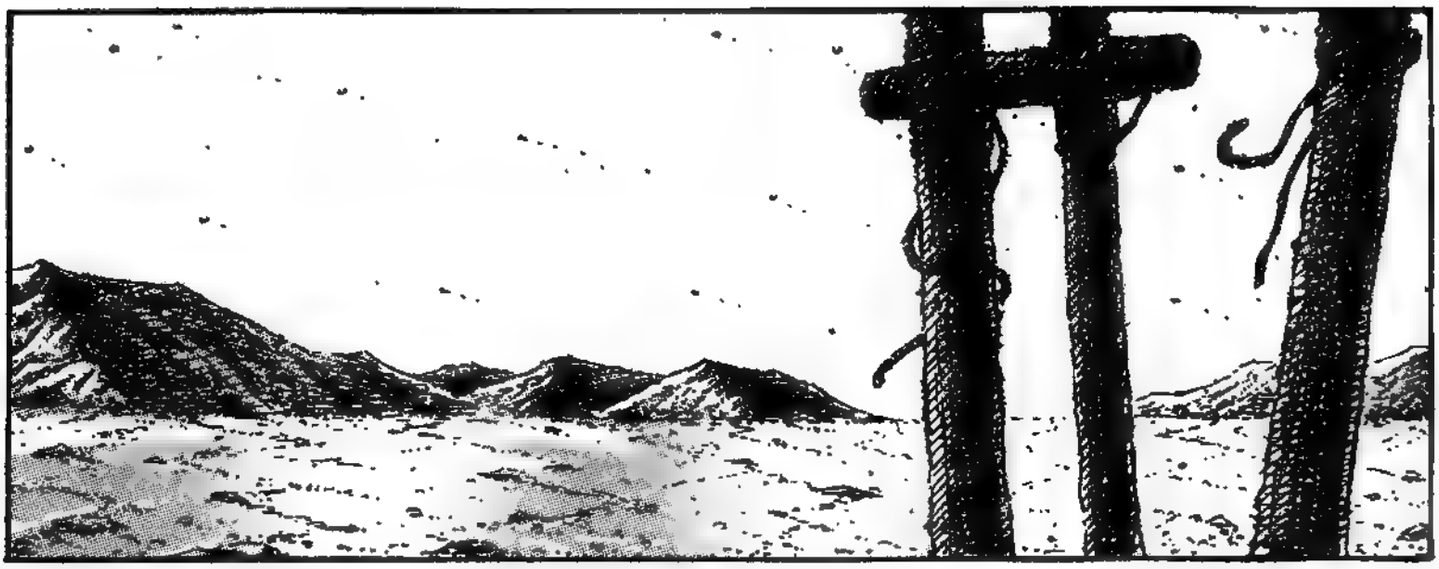
REACHING HERE JUST NOW.

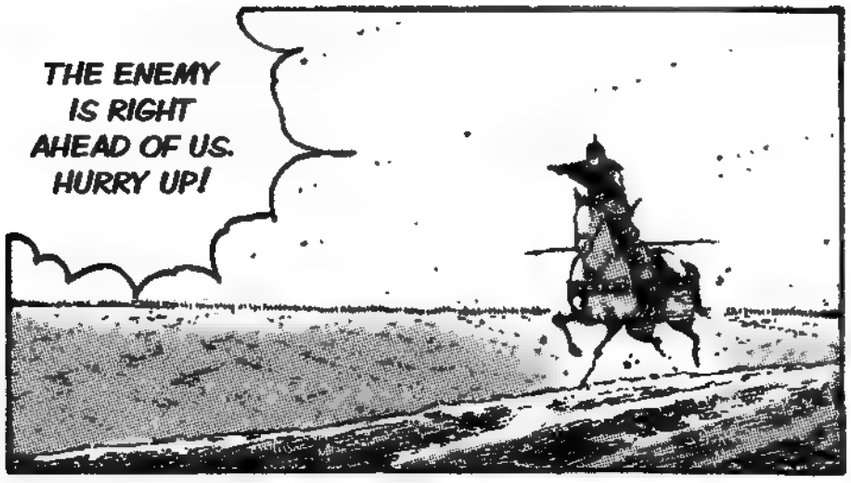
I AM DIGGING.

I ONLY WANT TO FIND THE REMAINS OF MY DEAREST ONE.
PLEASE TAKE A DETOUR, SIR.
THE SOIL IN THESE PARTS ARE LOOSE. IF AN ARMY TREAD THROUGH IT THE BONES IN THE MUD WILL BE A WRECK.
MY YOUNG MASTER'S ARMY IS ON ITS WAY HERE. THEY DON'T WANT A ROADBLOCK EITHER.
LET ME SAY IT AGAIN, GO AROUND IF YOU WANT TO PASS.
I'M NOT YIELDING THIS PATH TO YOU.
STOP LOOKING. I'LL SEND YOU TO SEE YOUR DEAREST ONE.

I'M IN A VERY SHITTY MOOD.
SCRAM!

OR PERHAPS ONE SHOULD NOT
ASK ABOUT A HERO'S ORIGIN.

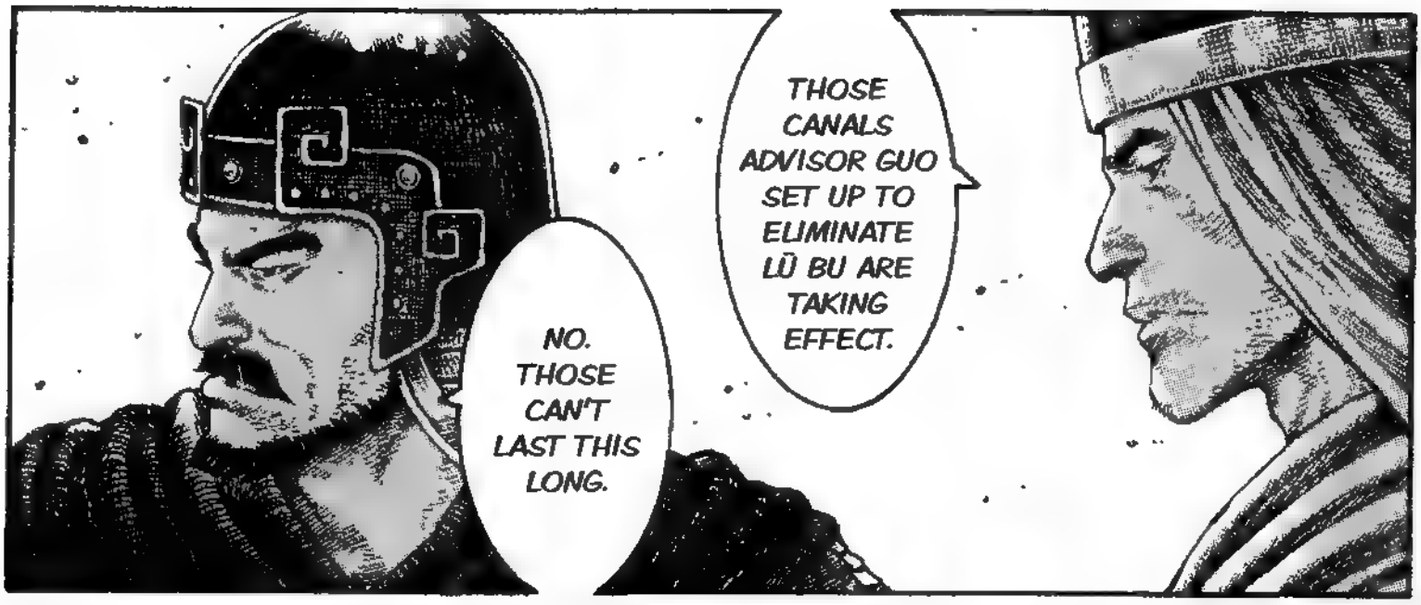



THE ENEMY IS RIGHT AHEAD OF US. HURRY UP!

BUT THEY'VE GOT US...

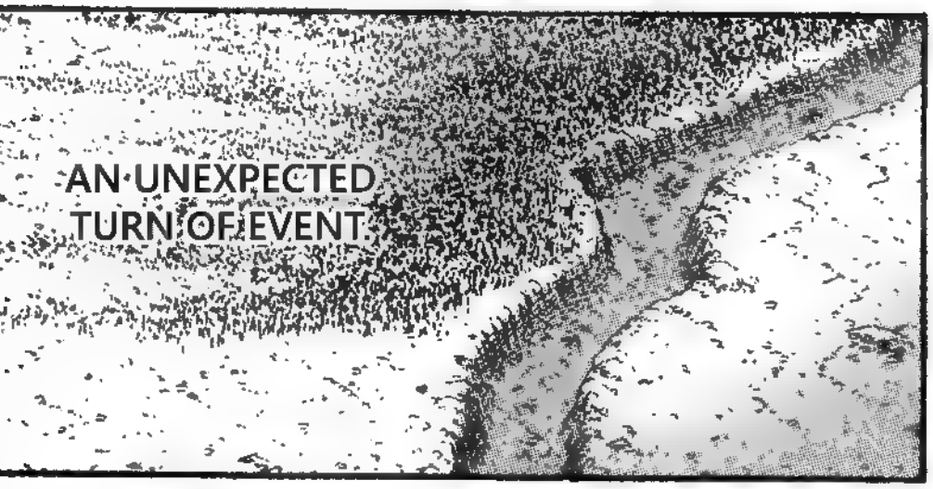
SHIT. THEY'RE COMING FROM THE EAST.

CHAPTER 273 ADDING OIL TO THE FIRE

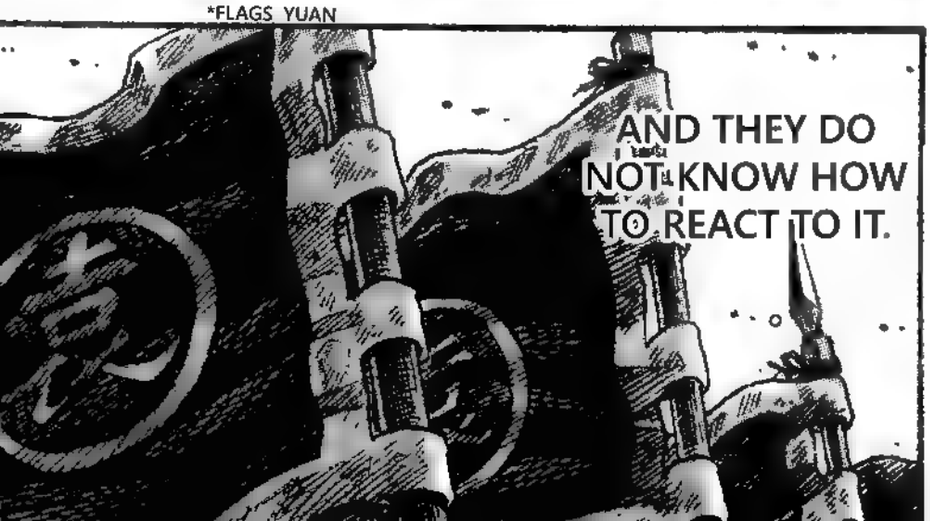

THOSE CANALS ADVISOR GUO SET UP TO ELIMINATE LÜ BU ARE TAKING EFFECT.
NO. THOSE CAN'T LAST THIS LONG.

FORGET IT. LET'S GET OUT OF HERE DURING THIS UNEXPECTED TURN OF EVENT.

THE ENEMY IS TRAVELING LIGHT. WE WON'T BE ABLE TO ESCAPE IF THEY CROSS OVER THE DITCHES.

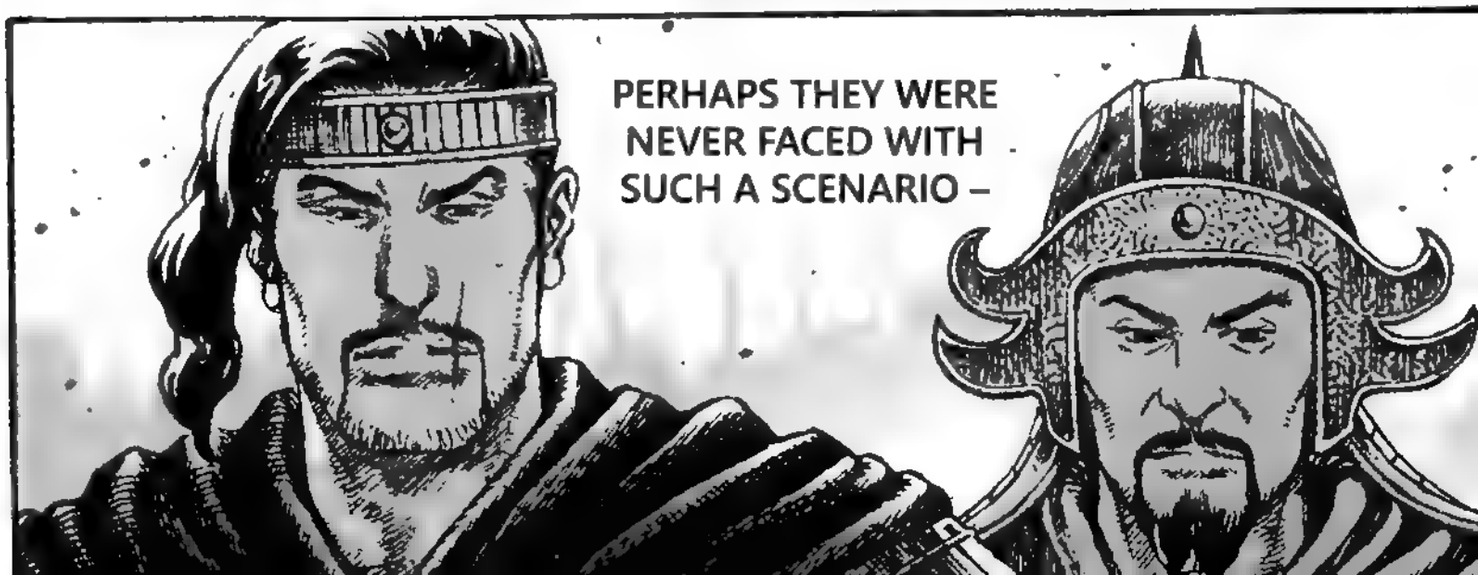

AN UNEXPECTED TURN OF EVENT

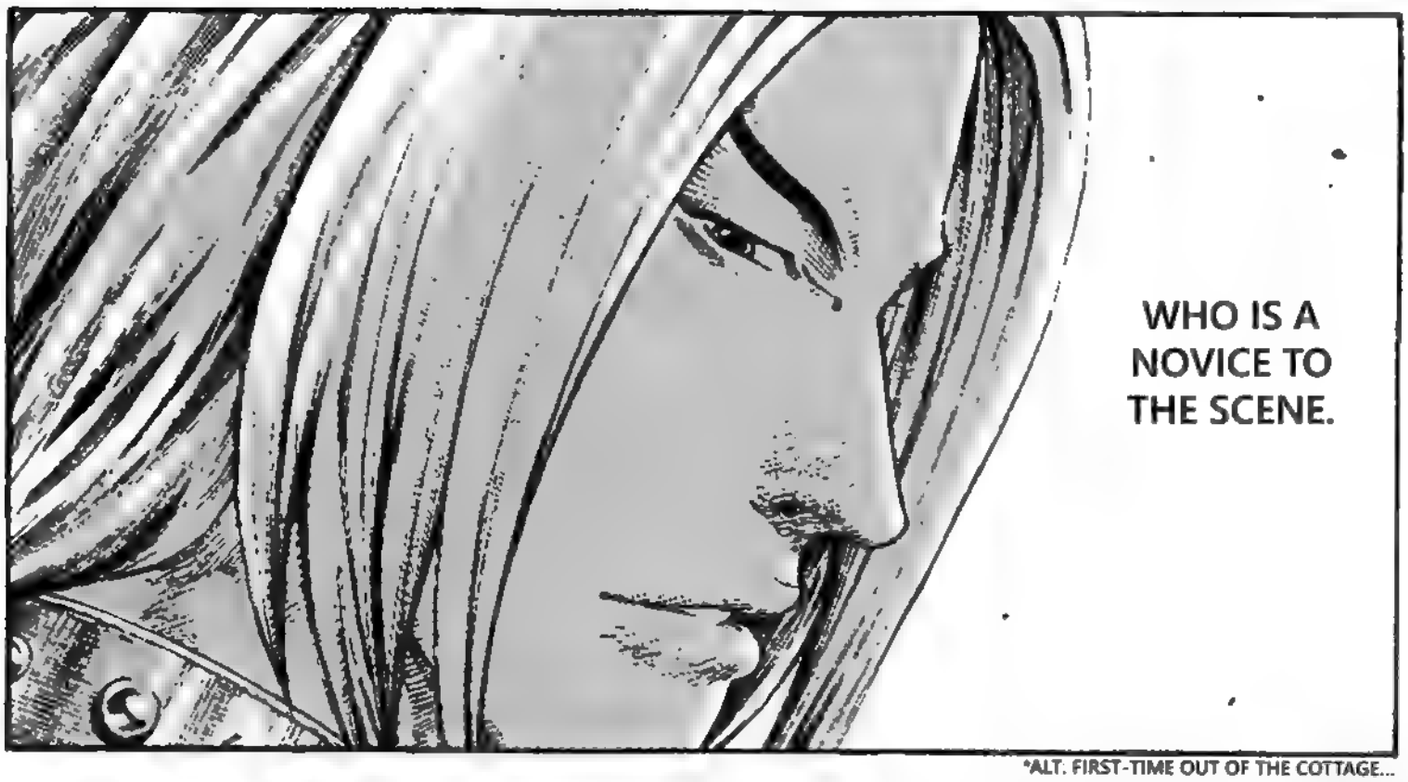
*FLAGS YUAN


AND THEY DO NOT KNOW HOW TO REACT TO IT.

EVEN THE POWERFUL YUAN CLAN ELITES WERE TOO SHOCKED TO MOVE FORWARD.

THE FEW EXPERIENCED GENERALS WERE SPEECHLESS AS WELL.


PERHAPS THEY WERE NEVER FACED WITH SUCH A SCENARIO –



*ALT. FIRST-TIME OUT OF THE COTTAGE...

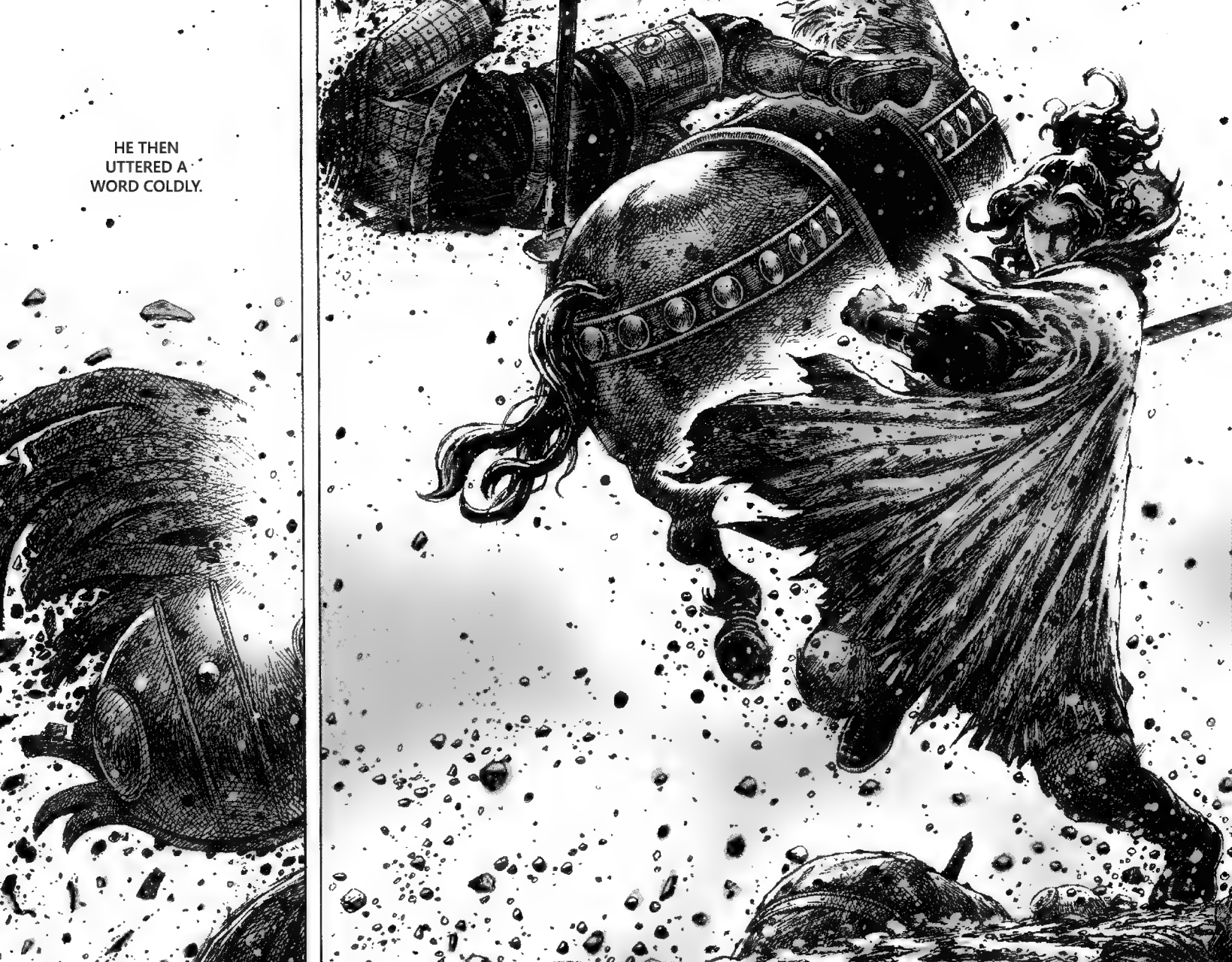
AS IF IT IS JUST
COMMON OCCURRENCE
TO HIM.

THIS PATH IS CLOSED.
SOON HE STARTS TO REPEAT THAT STATEMENT.
PLEASE GO AROUND, SIR.
DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM, BOY?

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF YUAN SHAO'S SON -

YOUNG MASTER YUAN TAN WANTS ME TO TAKE YOUR PATHETIC LIFE!

THAT MAN IS STILL CALM –
AS IF THE CHALLENGER IS NOTHING.
*SFX: PA~


HE THEN UTTERED A WORD COLDLY.

SCRAM!

KILL
SFX TA-

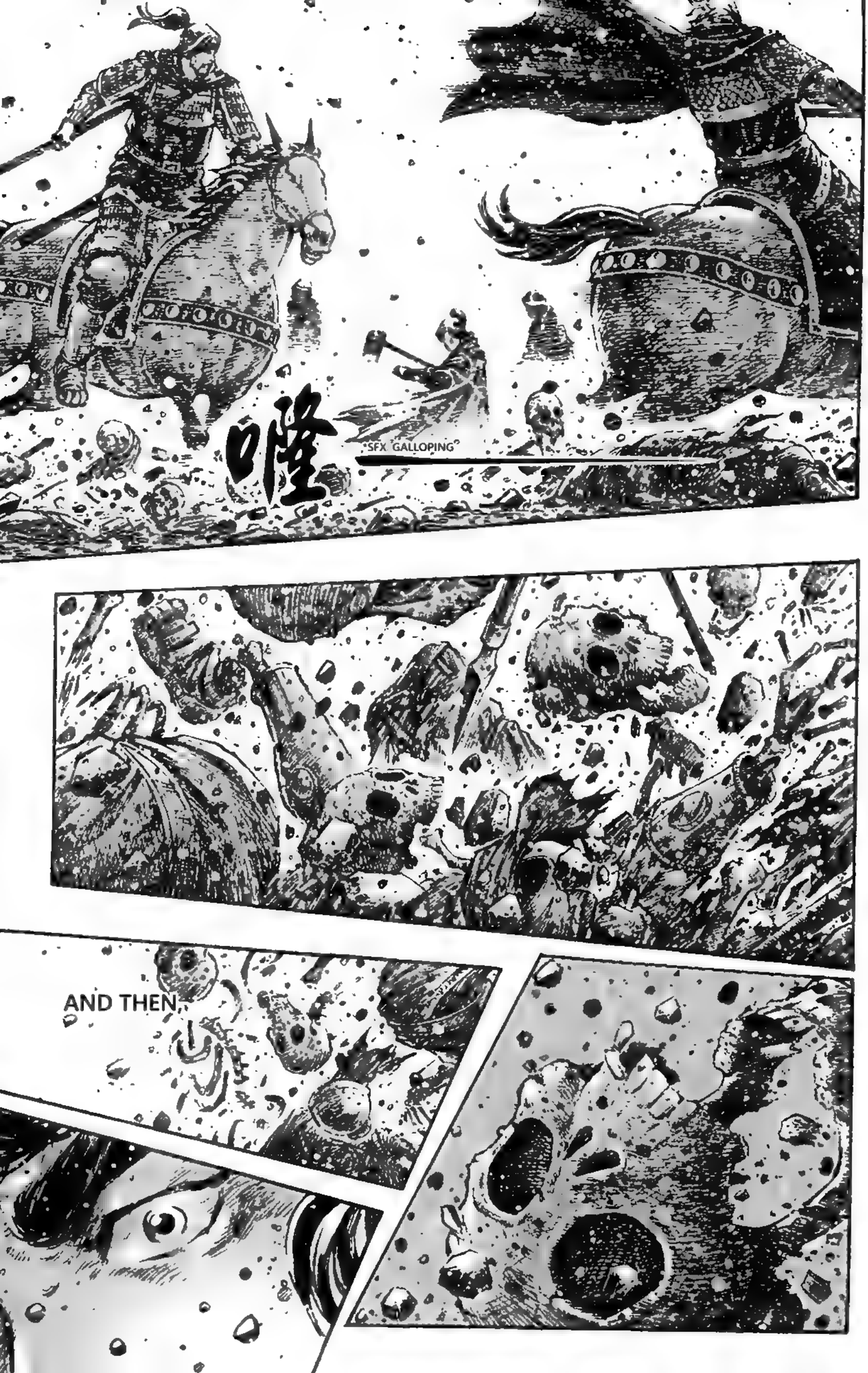
*SFX: PONG~
逢

KILL
*SFX PONG~
碰
*SFX SOIL
ENCI-
RCLE.

鋒
*SFX: ZING~
ENCIRCLE!
ATTACK!
*SFX: KA

噠
*SFX: GALLOPING
*SFX: DON~
噹
*SFX: DON~
噹
*SFX: PA~
啪

*SFX: PA~
SFX: SOIL
ENCIRCLE! ATTACK!


唯
"SFX: GALLOPING"
AND THEN...

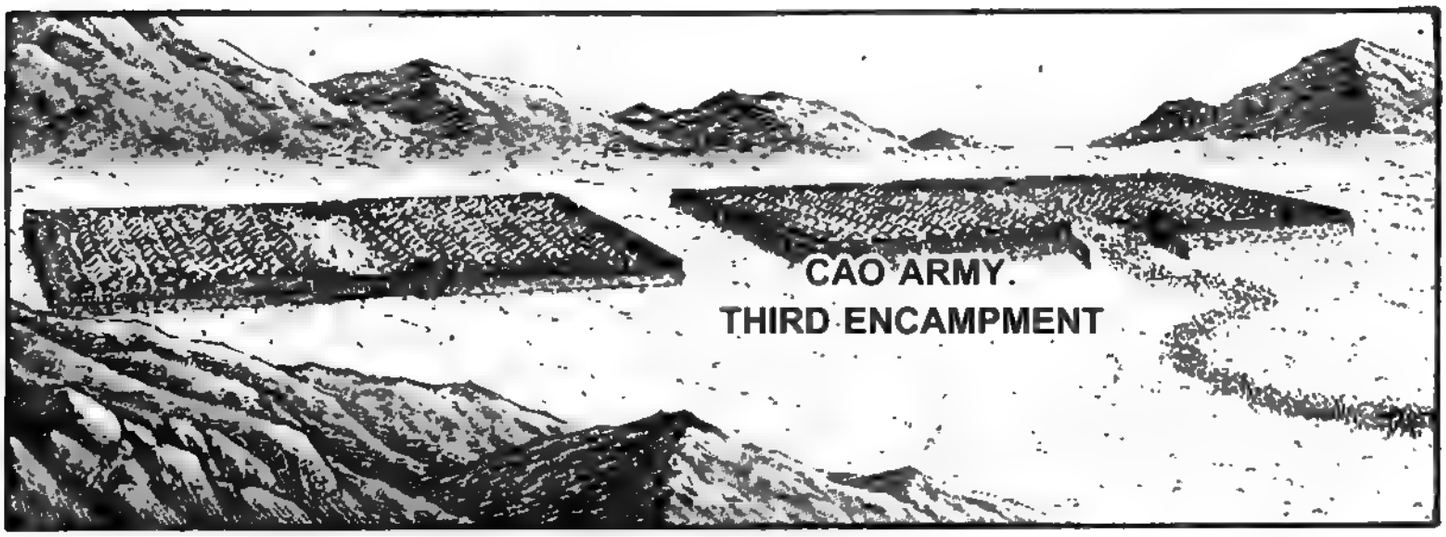
THAT MAN LOST HIS COOL.
THE SITUATION SPIRALED OUT OF CONTROL.
THE BLADE MAY FEEL COLD,

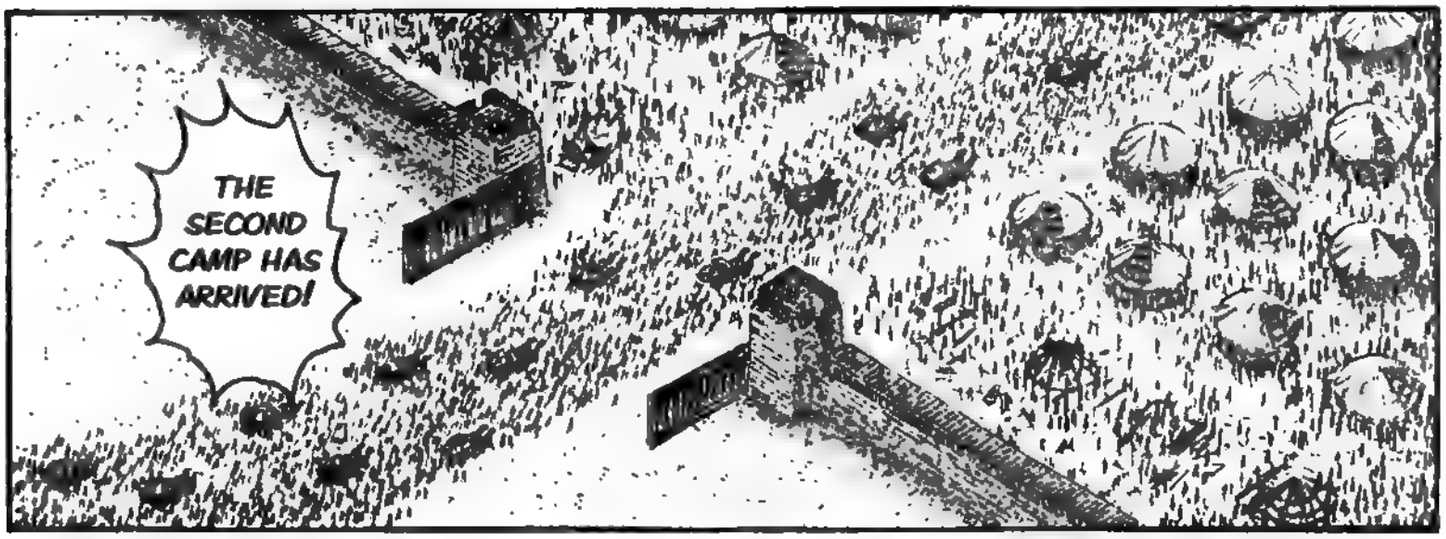
SFX: CHA
BUT IT CANNOT PREVENT THE BLOOD FROM BOILING.
THE BLOOD IS BURNING.
THE PAST MAY BE GONE, BUT IT CANNOT SUPPRESS THE BREWING FEELING.
AND OIL IS BEING ADDED TO THE FIRE.

AND FIRE IS REPEATING THAT WORD.

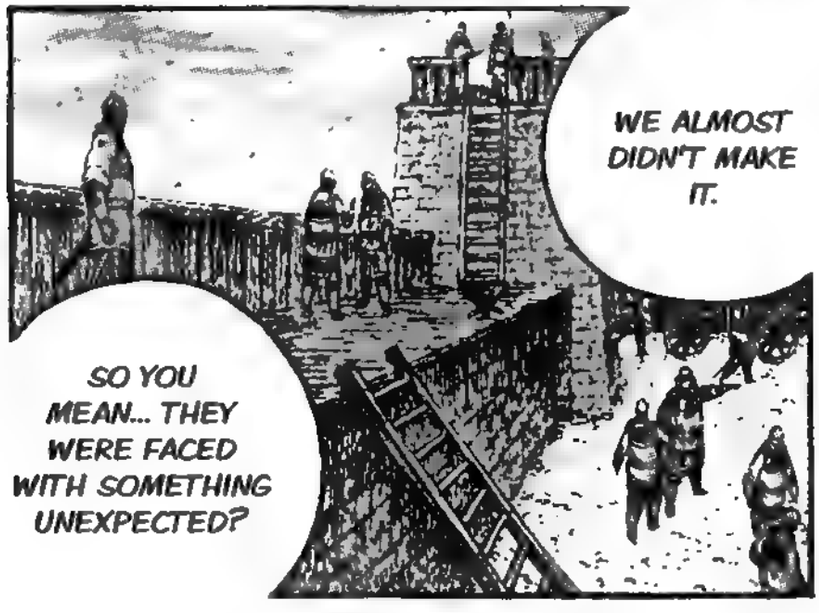
HE WHO HONORS COMRADES AND COMMITMENTS

WILL SHOCK THE WORLD
A FEW YEARS LATER AT CHANGBAN.





*ALT TEN-THOUSAND MEN BURIAL GROUND

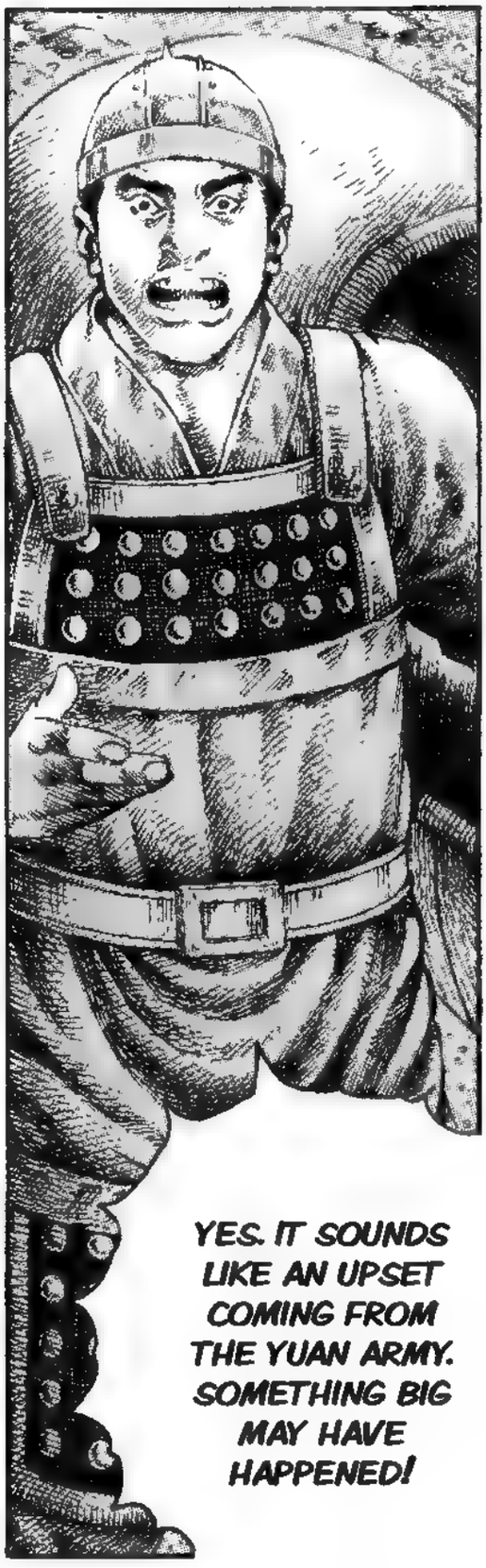


CHAPTER 274 THE SECOND STRANGE MAN

SIR!
CAMP MASTER OF THE THIRD ENCAMPMENT
HAN HAO
WHAT DID YOU FIND?
THE YUAN ARMY HAS A WEIRD WAY OF DEPLOYING ITS TROOPS. WHO KNOWS WHAT THEY'RE UP TO.
THE YUAN ARMY IS NOT RESTING. THEY WERE BLOCKED!
THE ONE WHO BLOCKED THEM IS THAT STRANGE MAN!

YOU... YOU MEAN THAT FRIEND OF CHEN DENG IS STILL THERE?

GOOD FOR US THAT THE YUAN ARMY STOPPED.


YES. IT SOUNDS LIKE AN UPSET COMING FROM THE YUAN ARMY. SOMETHING BIG MAY HAVE HAPPENED!

SIR, THERE IS ANOTHER MAN WHO REFUSED TO RETREAT.

LISTEN UP. WE SHOULD STILL UPROOT AND RETREAT BACK TO THE MAJOR DEFENSIVE LINE ACCORDING TO ADVISOR GUO'S PLAN.

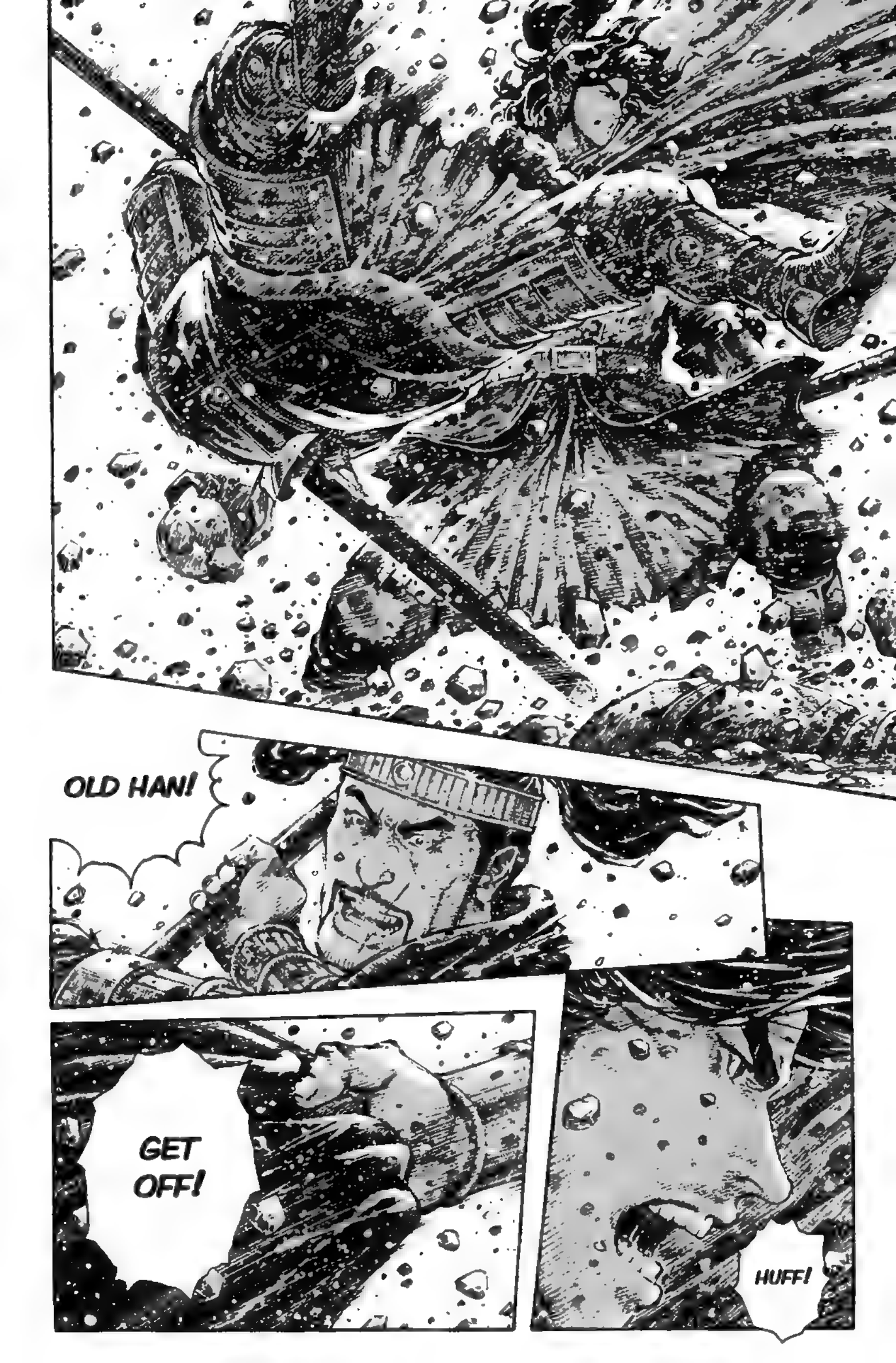
GENERAL HAN IS RIGHT. OUR ARMY HAS COMPLETELY FINISHED PACKING.
HOW DARE HE DISOBEY A MILITARY ORDER?
IT'S JUST THAT HE IS NOT DIRECTLY UNDER OUR COMMAND.
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE. I HAVE NO INSUBORDINATE SOLDIER IN MY TROOP!
AND HIS RANK IS HIGH. NOT SOMEONE I CAN...

*SFX: PONG~
碰
*SFX: PA~
啪

QIAO SONG!
DON'T BE RASH, OLD HAN!
THIS GUY IS NO JOKE!

*SFX: ZING~
錚
STAY CALM!

EVEN FOR VETERANS LIKE THEM, THIS IS A FIRST.
THEY HAVE LOST IT.
WHEN FACED WITH THIS MAN.
GET OFF!
WE ARE LIKE CHILDREN.


OLD HAN!
GET OFF!
HUFF!

SFX: PONG
WHOA!
STEP

*SFX: PA~
啪
*SFX: PONG~
碰

*SFX. CROWD NOISE
嗥
ALL...
ALL THREE
FINISHED.
SCRAM!

SCRAM
HOLD THE ENTRANCE!
LOOK OUT. HE'S COMING UP!
TA
BOY!

咻
*SFX: SHOO
GET OFF!
噹
*SFX: DON~

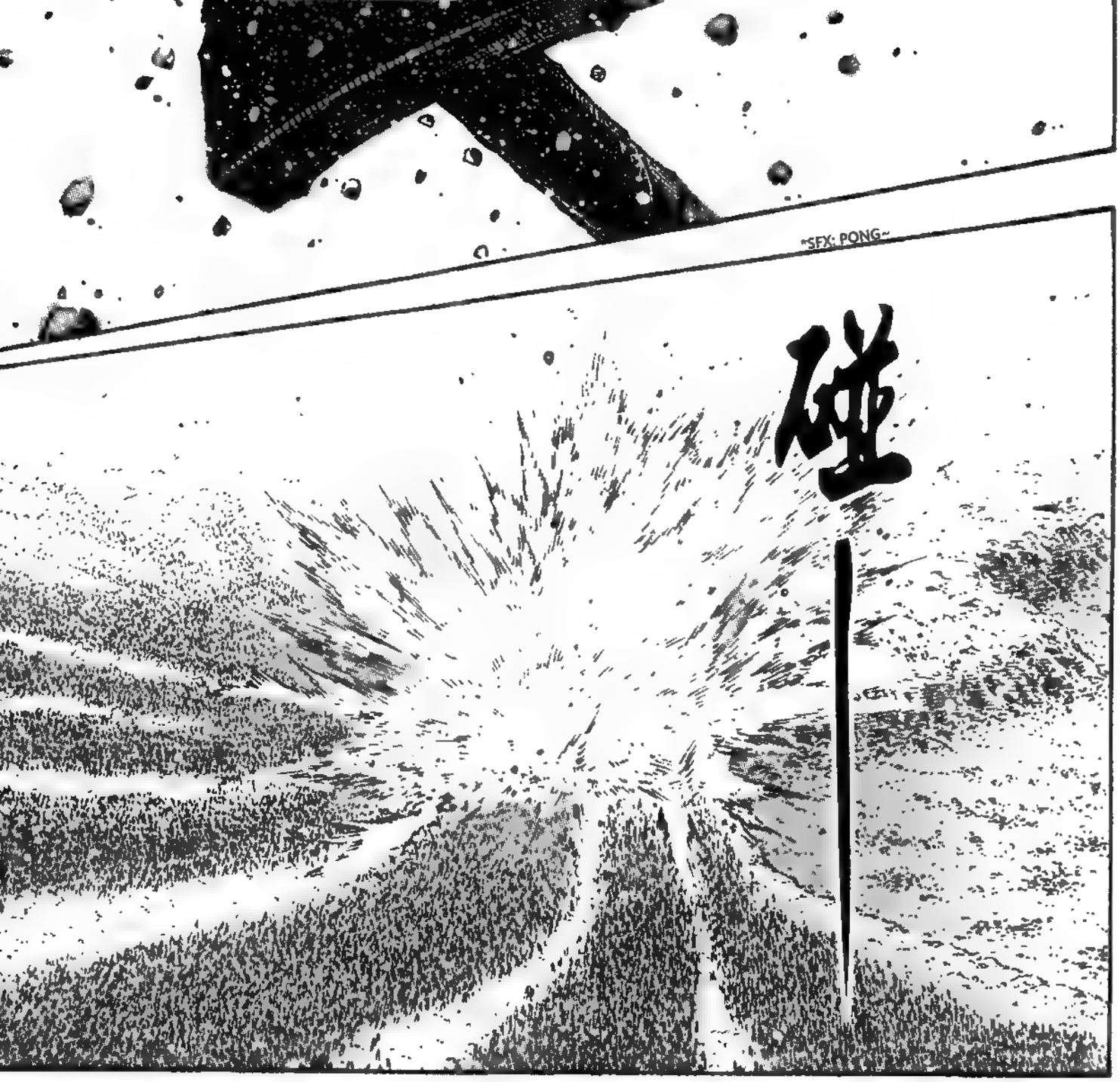
TA

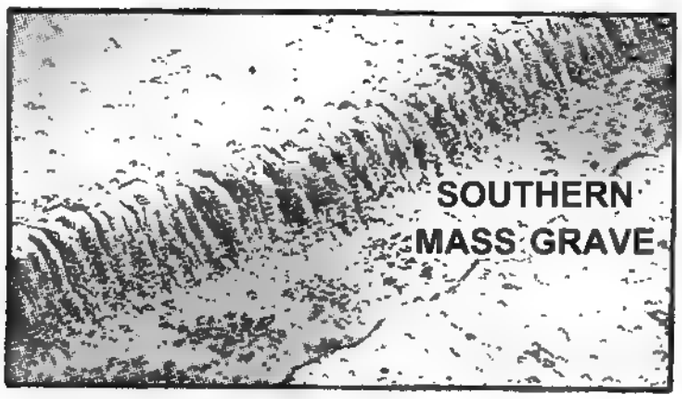
HOLD... HOLD YOUR GROUND...

HOLD...

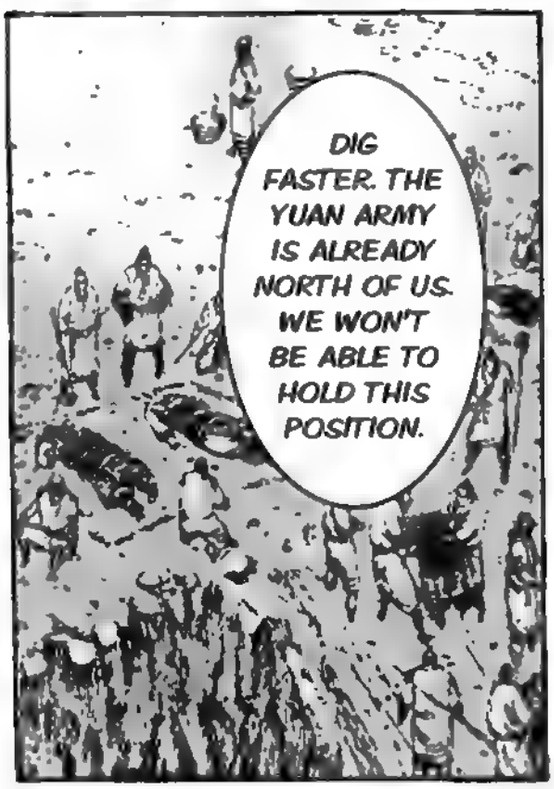
STAY CALM! HE... HE'S JUST ONE MAN!
STAY PUT!
THERE YOU ARE.
HUFF.

SCRAM!


*SFX: PONG~
碰


SOUTHERN
MASS GRAVE

I FOUND LI LEI!


DIG FASTER. THE YUAN ARMY IS ALREADY NORTH OF US. WE WON'T BE ABLE TO HOLD THIS POSITION.

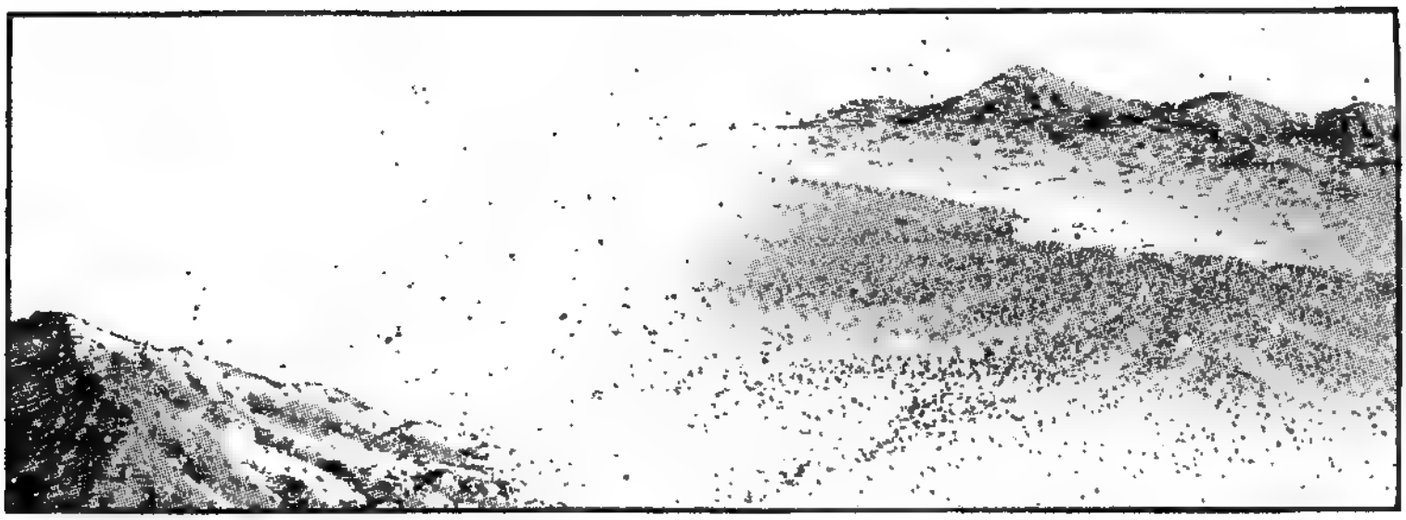
NO. THAT'S NOT HIS ARMOR.
SHIT. HOW DO WE TELL WITHOUT THE HEAD.

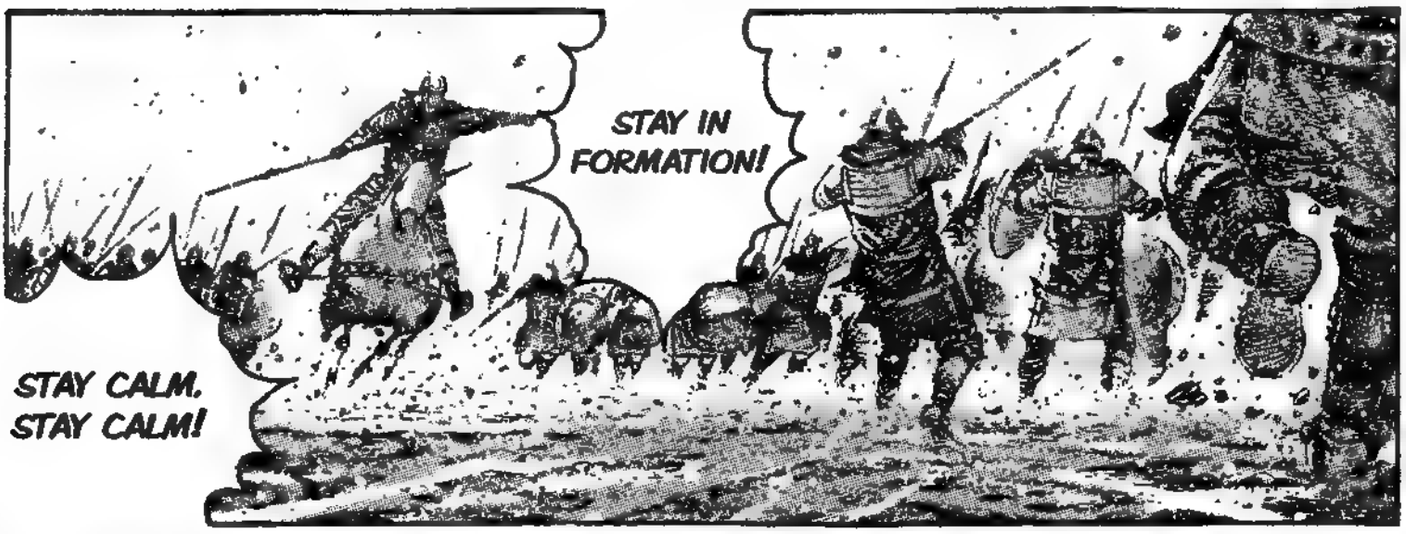
YES. THEY MIGHT BE FACING SOME TROUBLE AT THE MASS GRAVE NEAR THE NORTHERN THIRD CAMP.
YOU MEAN THEY STOPP-ED?
CAO CAO EXECUTED SO MANY OF OUR BROTHERS, BOSS. WE CAN'T KEEP LOOKING AT A TIME LIKE THIS...
BOSS...
KEEP DIGGING... I'M HERE...
THEY DIED ALL BECAUSE OF ME. TAKING THEIR REMAINS BACK TO THEIR FAMILIES IS THE LEAST I CAN DO.

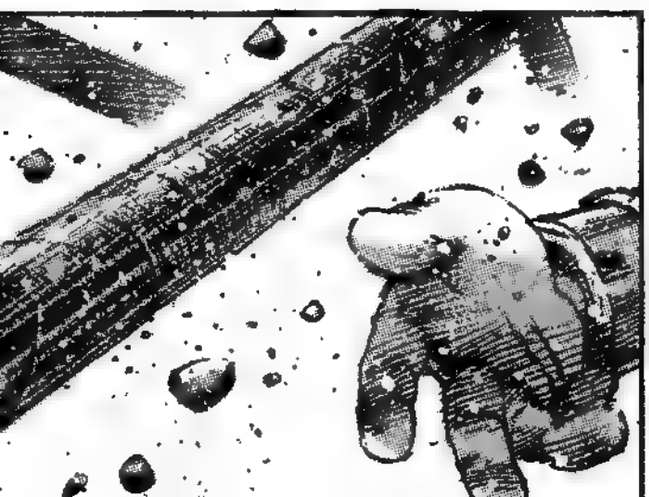
NO ONE SHALL GET PAST THE REACH OF MY SWORD.

HE WHO HOLDS HIS GROUND

WILL SURPASS LÜ BU A FEW YEARS LATER
AS A GOD OF WAR AT HEFEI.




STAY IN FORMATION!
STAY CALM, STAY CALM!



CHAPTER 275 TWO DEMONS

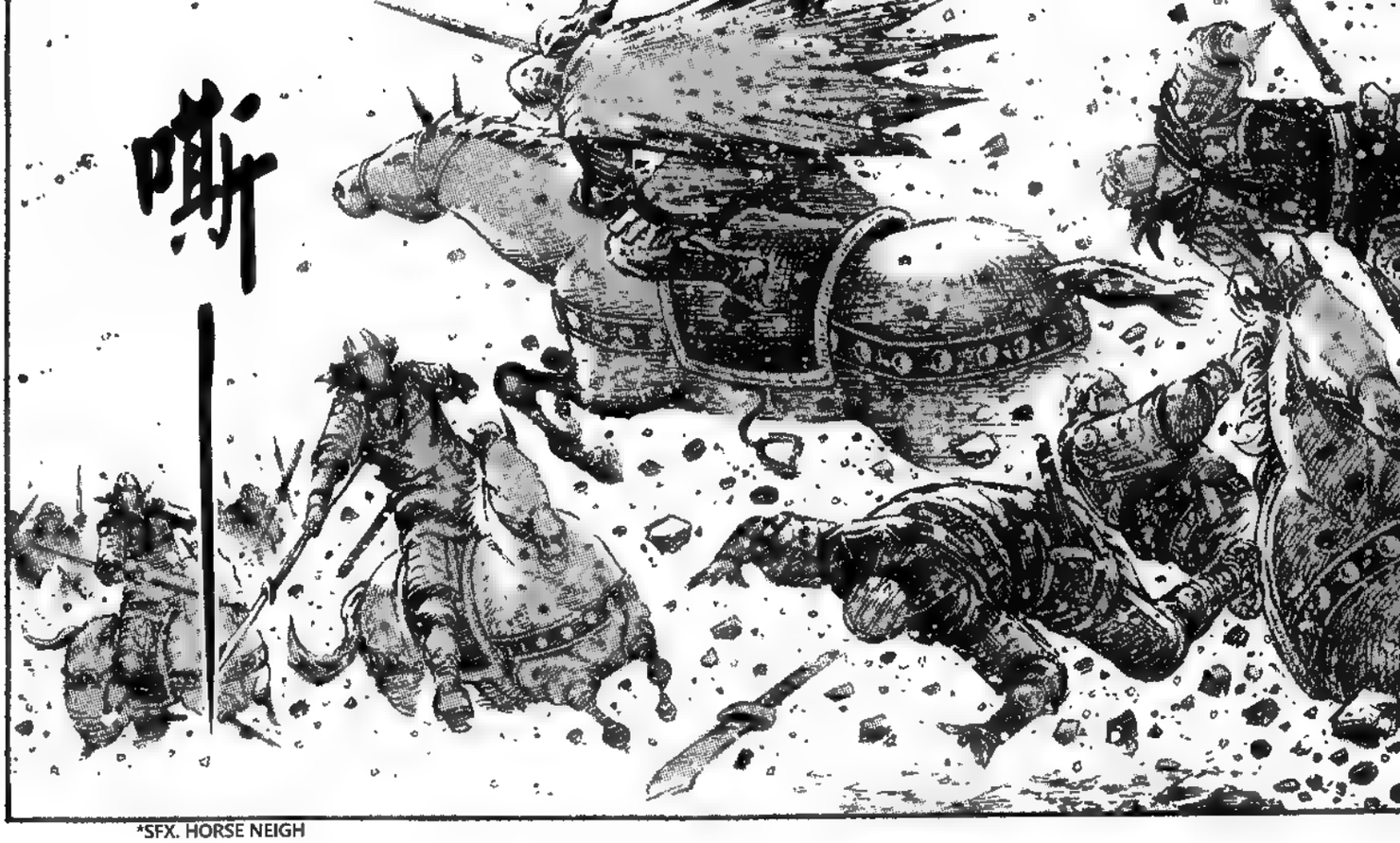
HUFF.
*SFX. CHA~
喀
*SFX. PONG~
碰
SCRAM.

MOVE ASIDE. EVERYBODY. THE CAVALRY IS COMING!

KILL

HUFF.

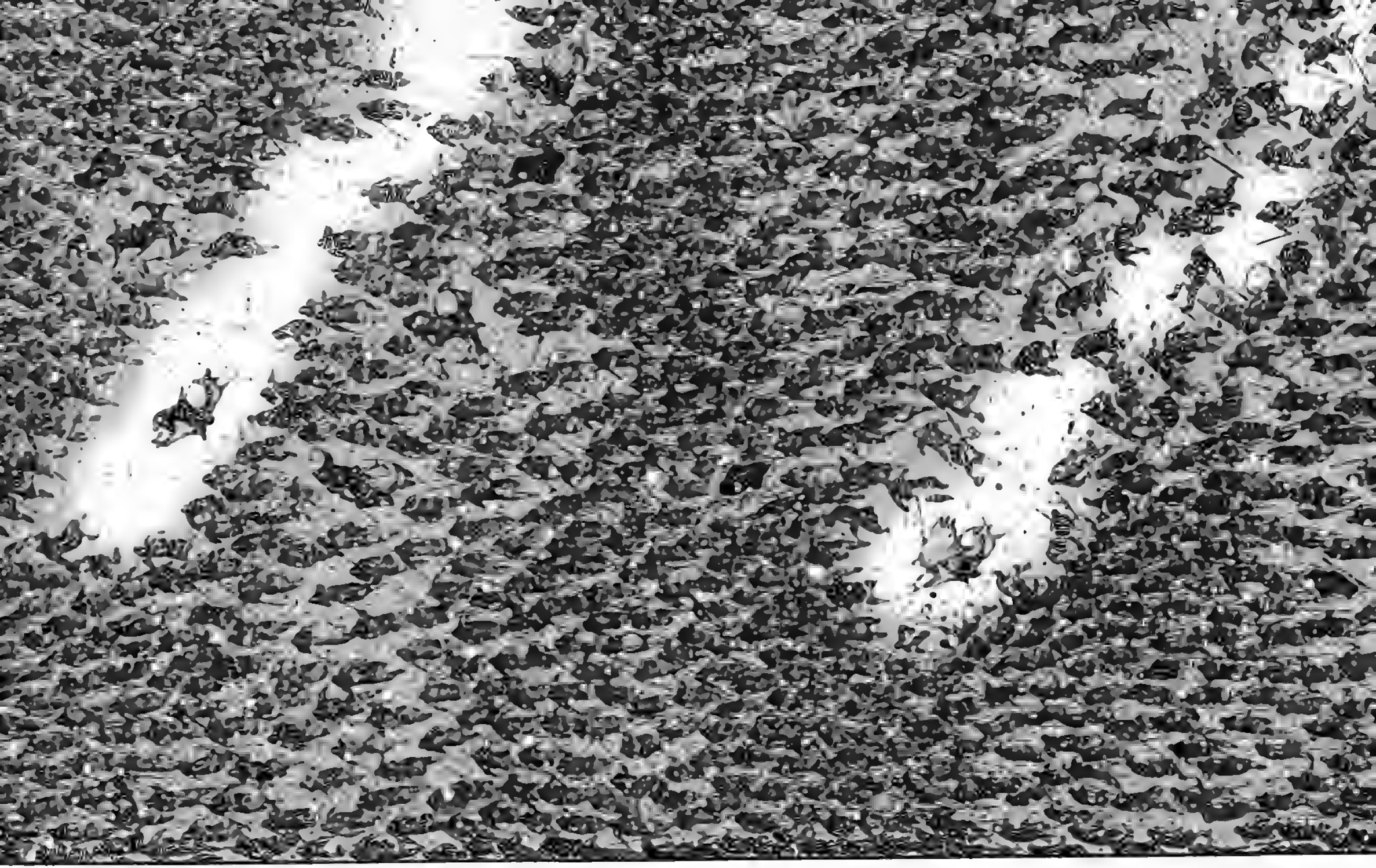
SCRAM.
SFX: PA-
UP!
HUFF.



*SFX. HORSE NEIGH

*ALT. FOUND (YOU)

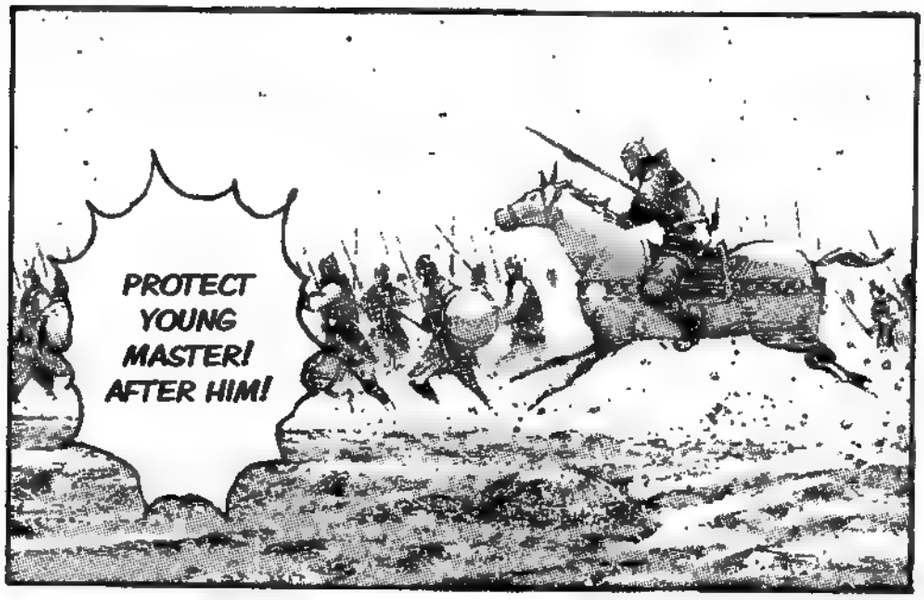
KILL
THIS WAY, YOUNG MASTER!



HE MOVES THROUGH THIS MASS OF TEN THOUSAND LIKE THERE IS NO ONE AROUND...
WHO...
UNLESS...
WHO THE HELL IS THIS GUY?

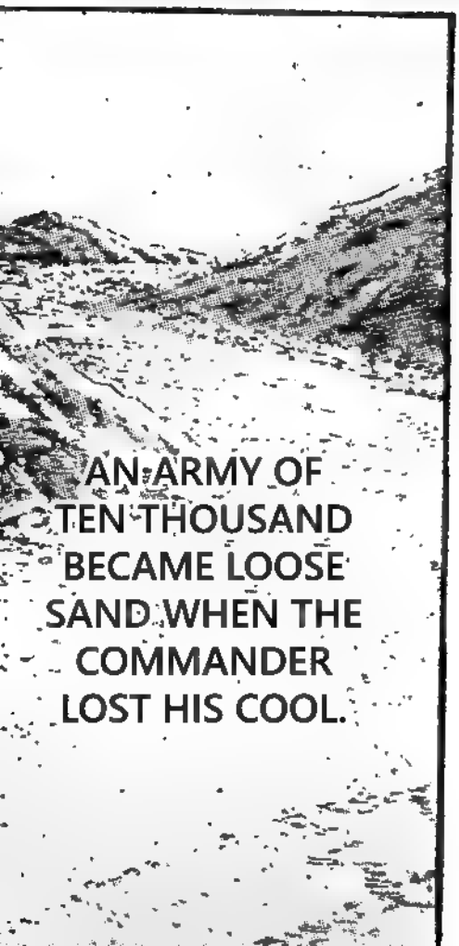
LÜ BU!
LÜ BU IS STILL ALIVE?
REAR GUARD!
IS THIS CAO CAO'S TRICKERY?

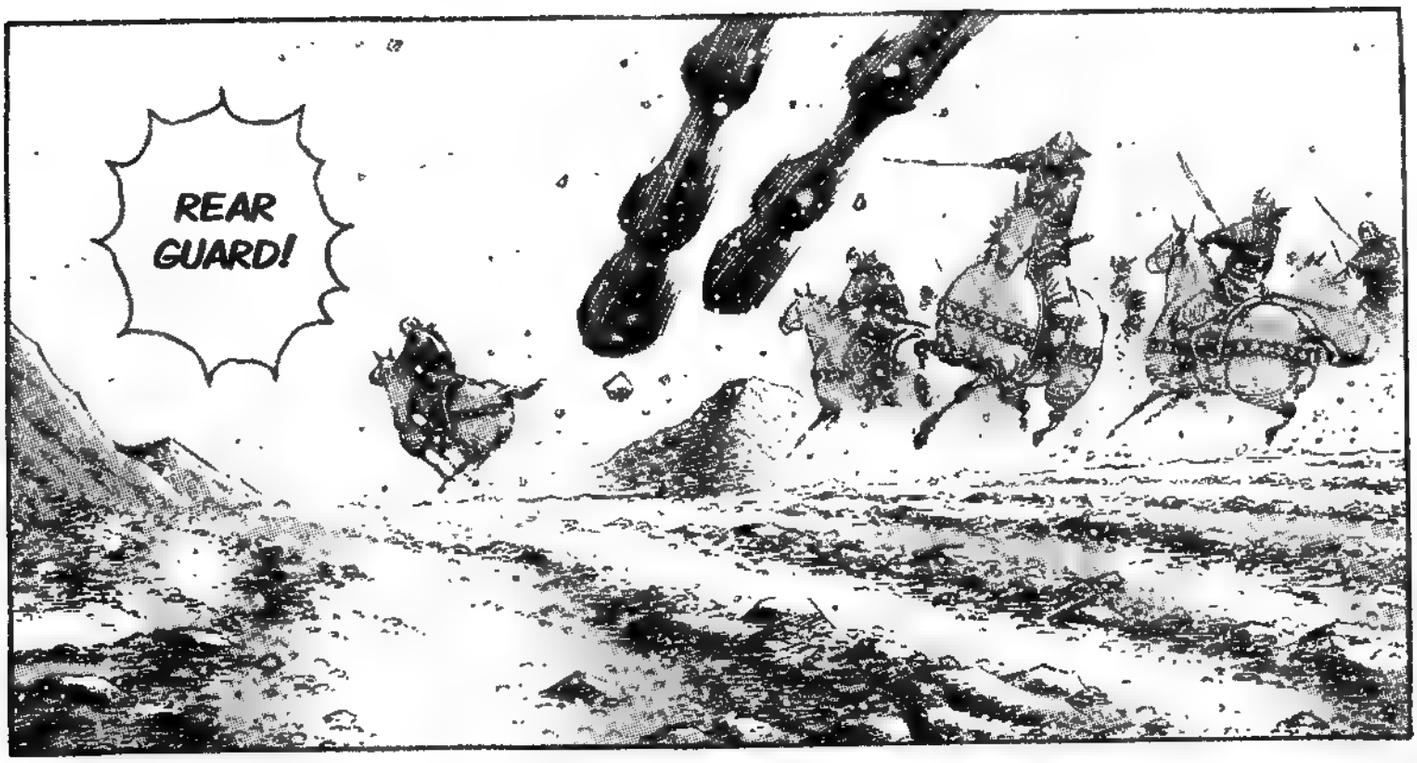
YOU MEN, BE MY REAR GUARD

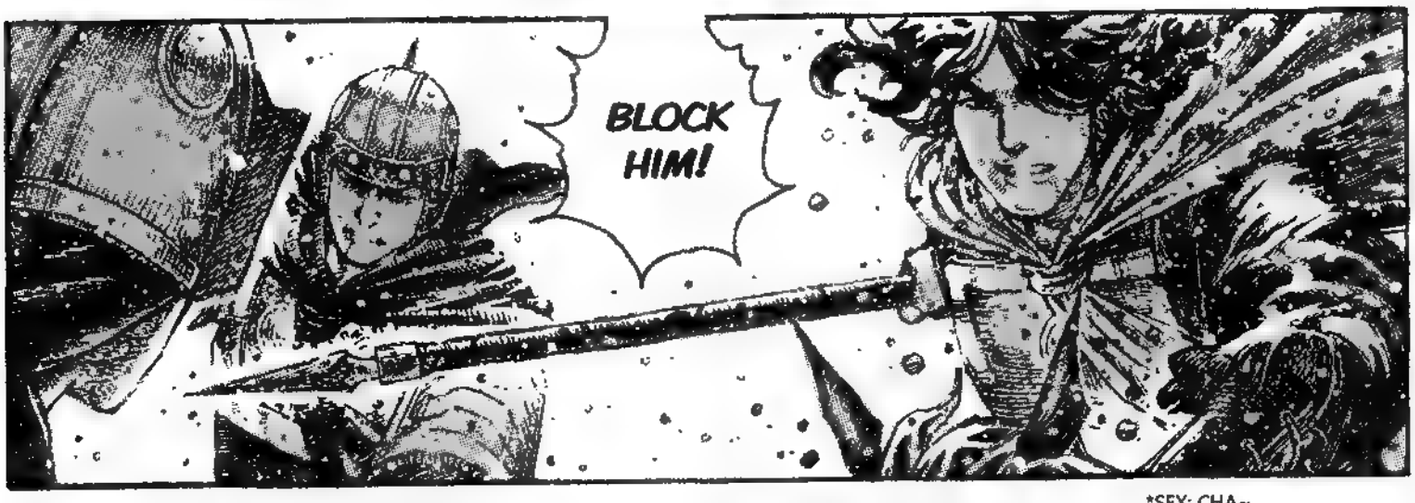

PROTECT YOUNG MASTER! AFTER HIM!

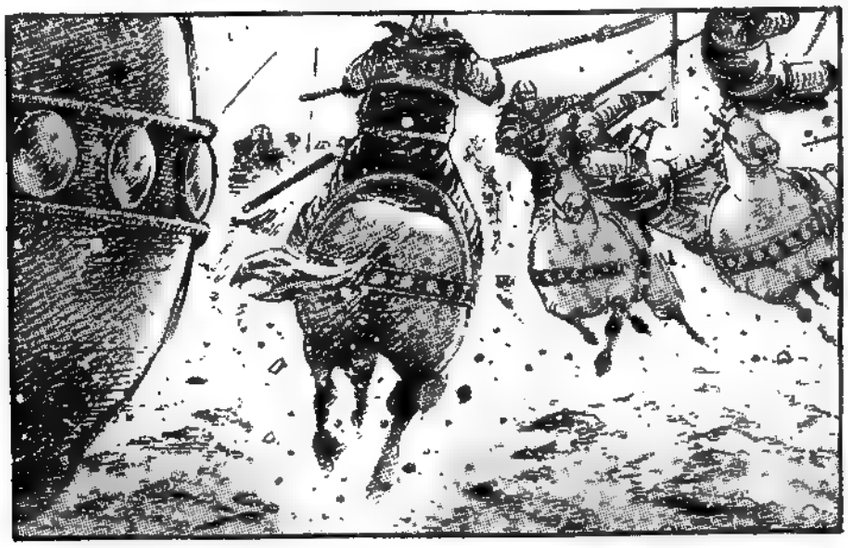
OH NO, OUR TROOP BROKE FORMATION CHASING AFTER YOUNG MASTER!

CHAOS.

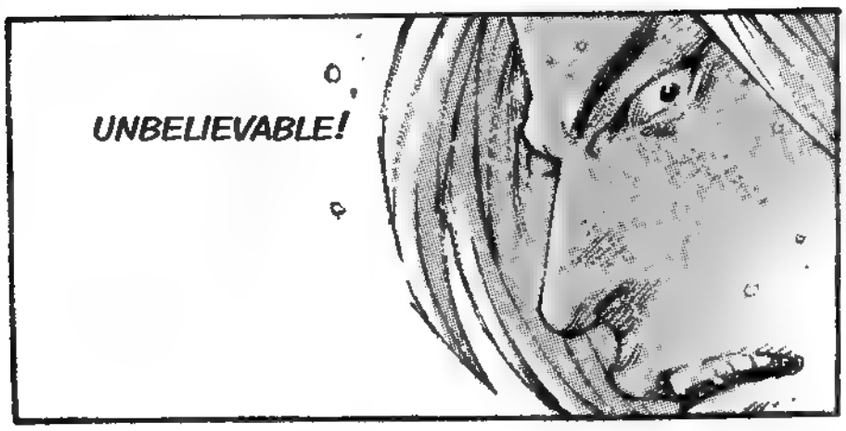

AN ARMY OF TEN THOUSAND BECAME LOOSE SAND WHEN THE COMMANDER LOST HIS COOL.





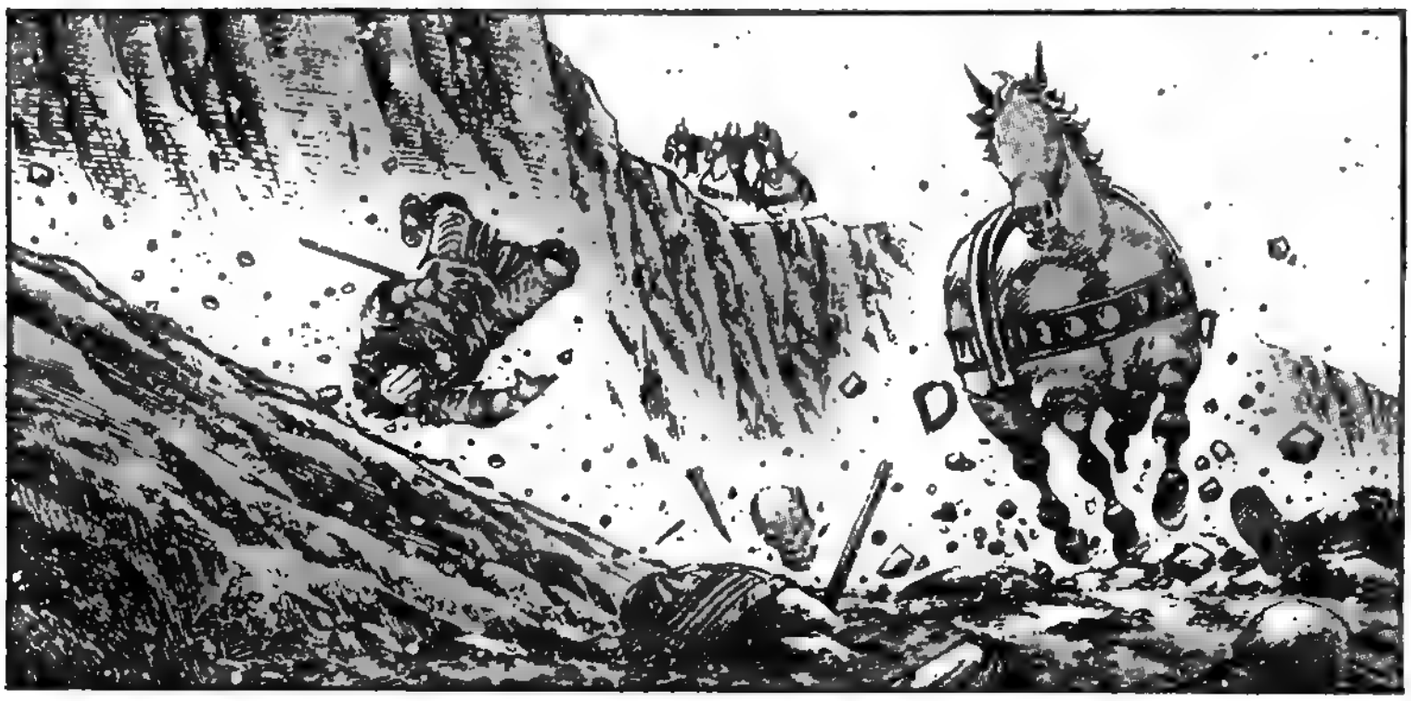


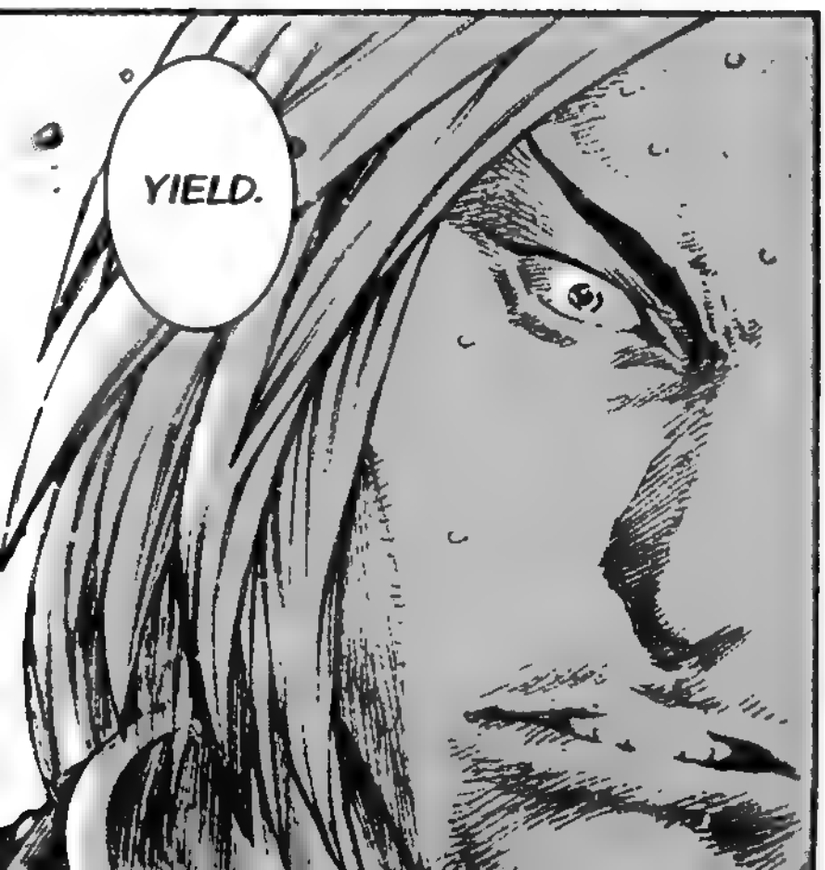
*SFX: CHA~

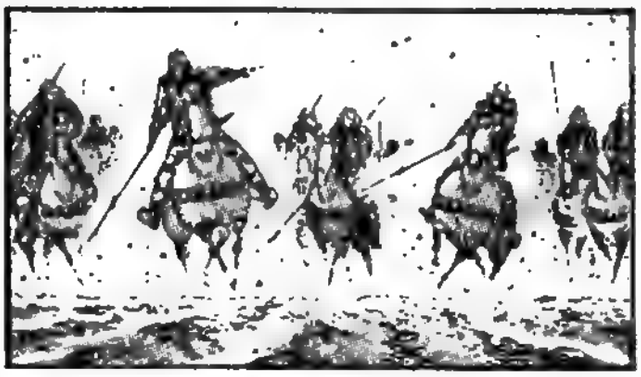


LÜ BU REALLY IS STILL ALIVE!
WE FELL FOR THEIR TRICK!
FOLLOW ME TO THE OTHER SIDE!
THERE'S A PATH HERE, YOUNG MASTER!

碰
SFX_PONG

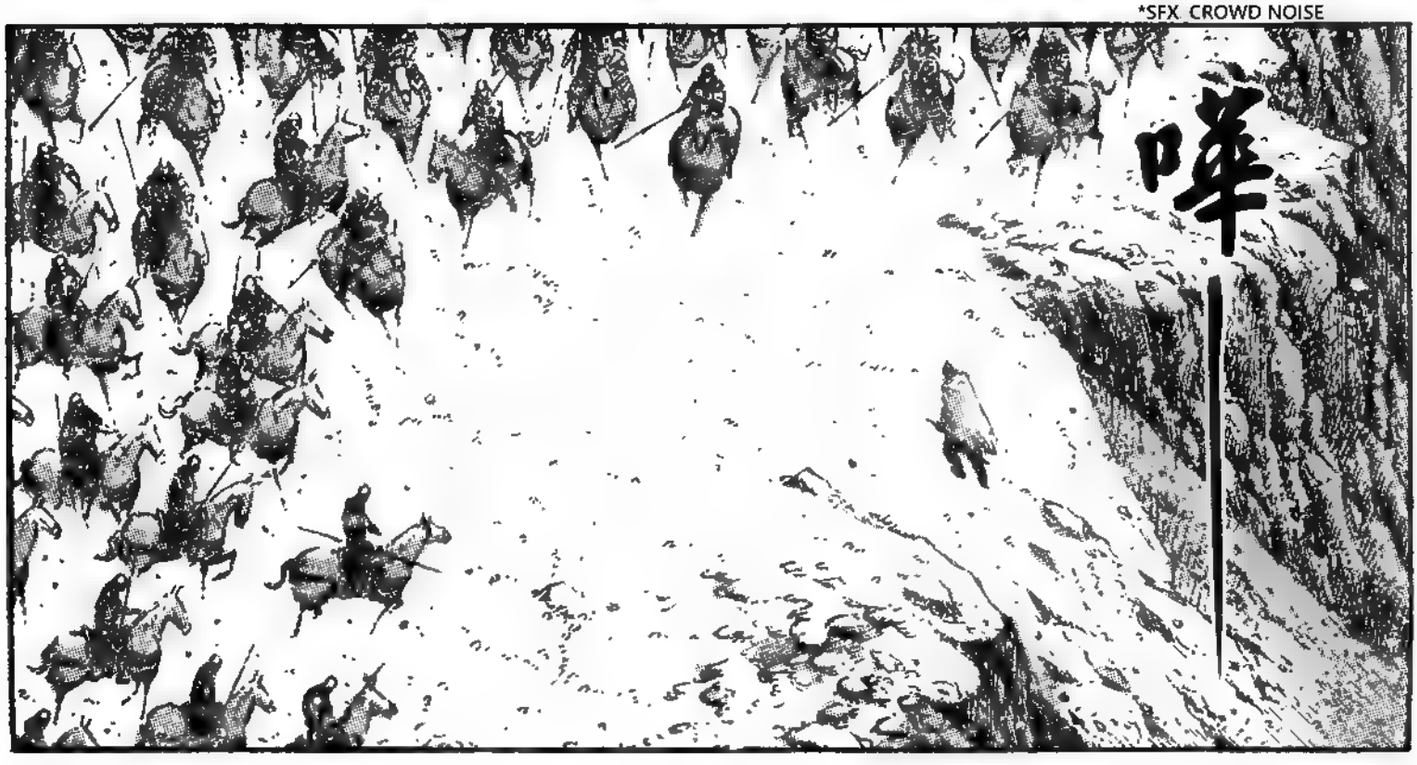



YIELD.



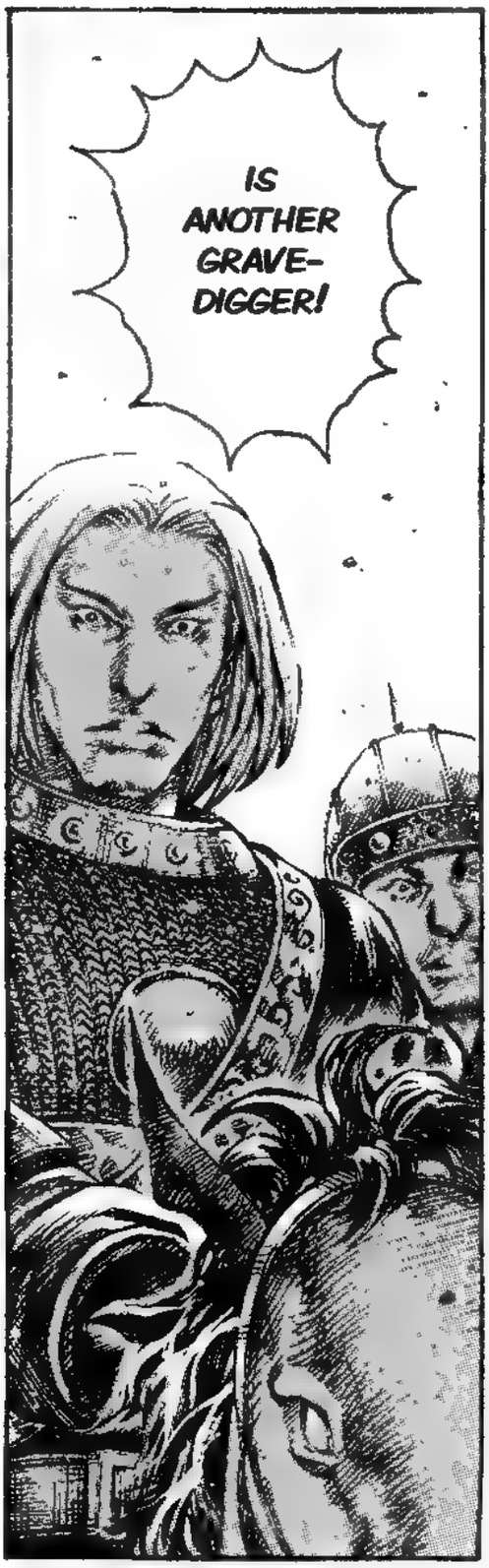
TA

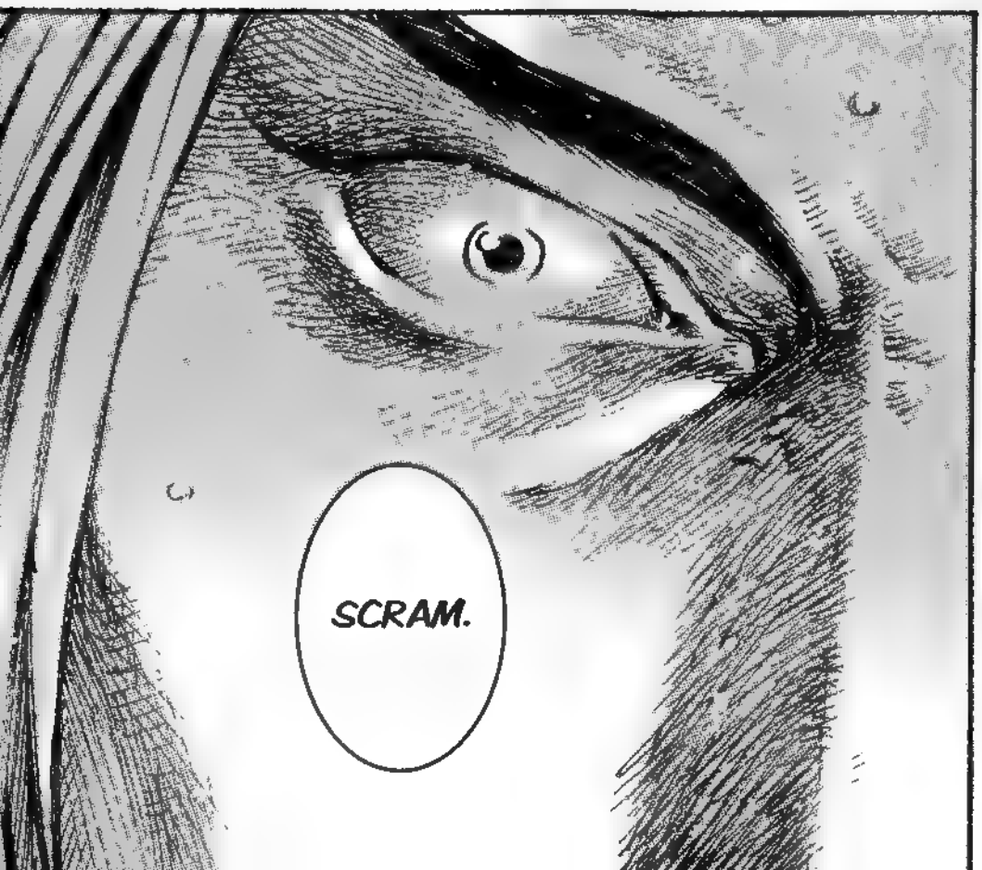
*SFX. CROWD NOISE



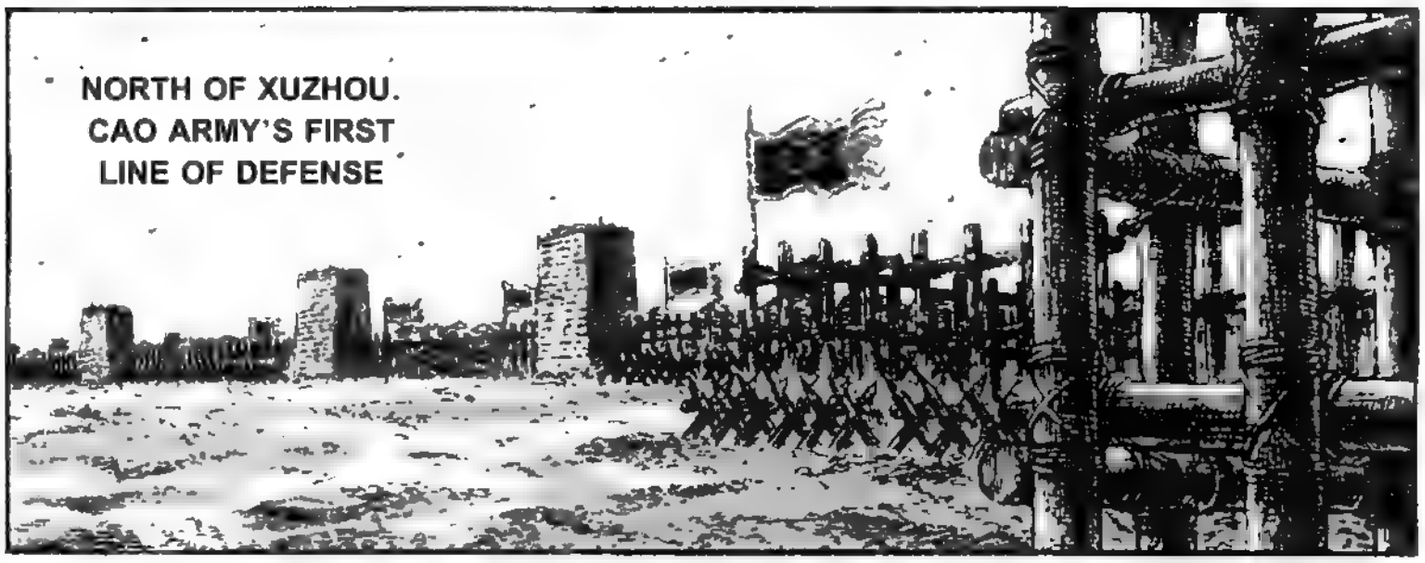
BE CAREFUL, EVERYONE... THIS GUY...
HOW... HOW DID ANOTHER ONE...

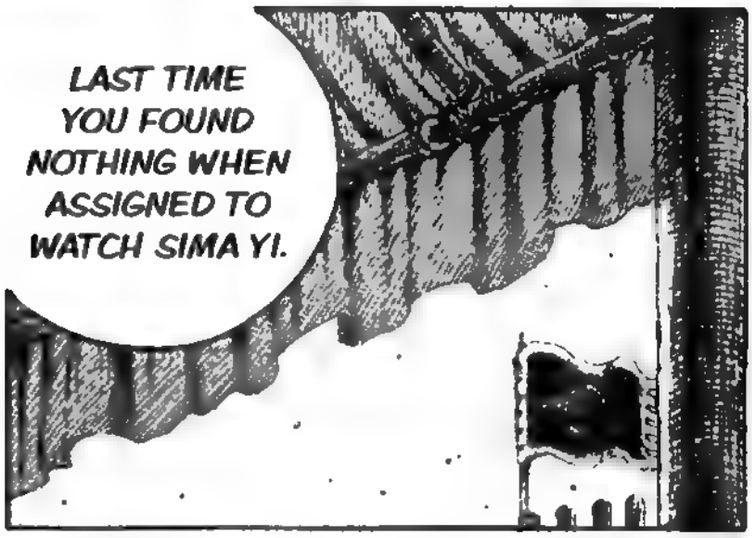
THE CORPSES WILL BE A MESS IF THE ARMY TREAD OVER THEM.

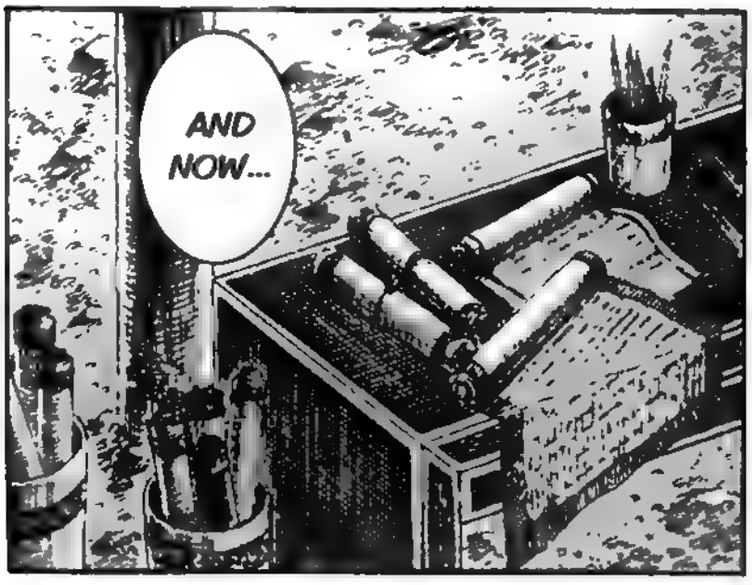

IS ANOTHER GRAVE-DIGGER!


SCRAM.

I'M IN A VERY SHITTY MOOD.



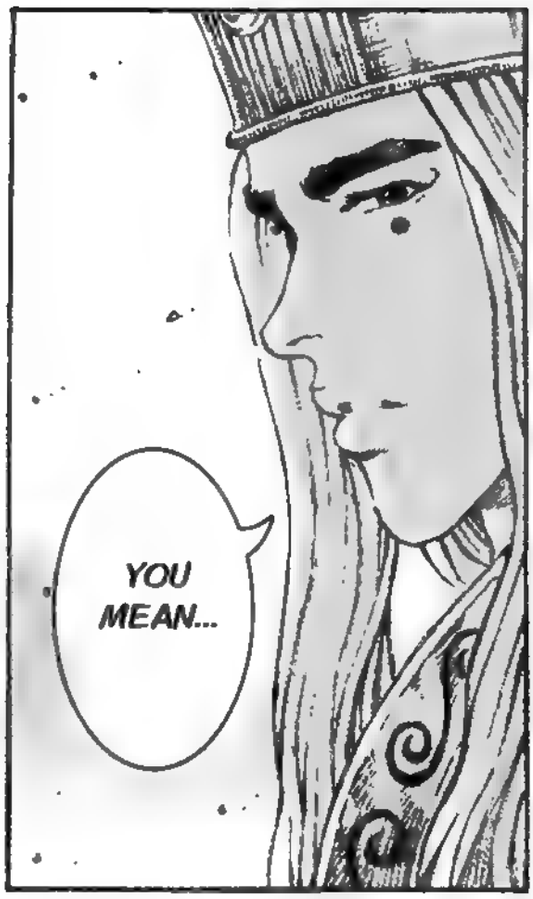




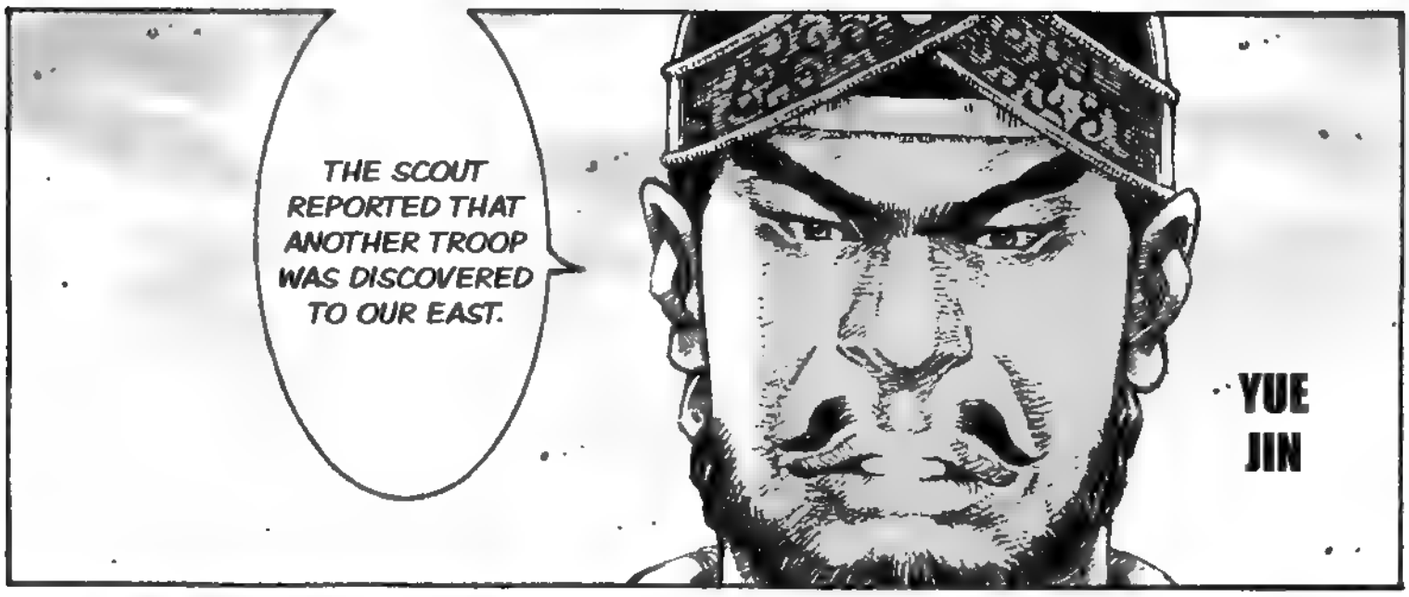
*ALT MAKE MISTAKES AGAIN AND AGAIN

CHAPTER 276 A YOUNG MASTER IN MISFORTUNE

THIS MAN HAS COMMITTED THE HEINOUS ACT OF INSUBORDINATION. OUR LORD WILL DEAL WITH HIM.
I'M INCOMPETENT. I HAVE FAILED ADVISOR GUO JIA.
THE ENEMY APPROACHES. OUR TOP PRIORITY IS TO HOLD THE DEFENSIVE POSITION. NO TIME FOR GAMES.
THANK YOU, SIR.
DON'T WORRY. EVEN HAN HAO COULDN'T TAME HIM. LET ALONE YOU TWO.
DEPLOY SOME TROOP ON THE NORTHERN HILLS. PREPARE TO FACE THE ENEMY.
DEP-UTY.
HERE.

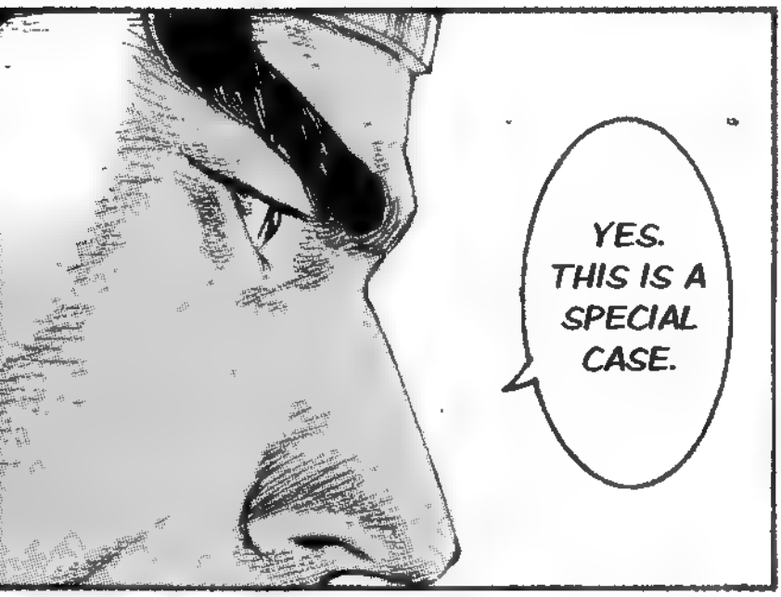

YOU MEAN...

THE ENEMY HAS YET TO APPEAR IN THE NORTHERN HILLS. I SUSPECT A CHANGE IN THEIR PLAN.

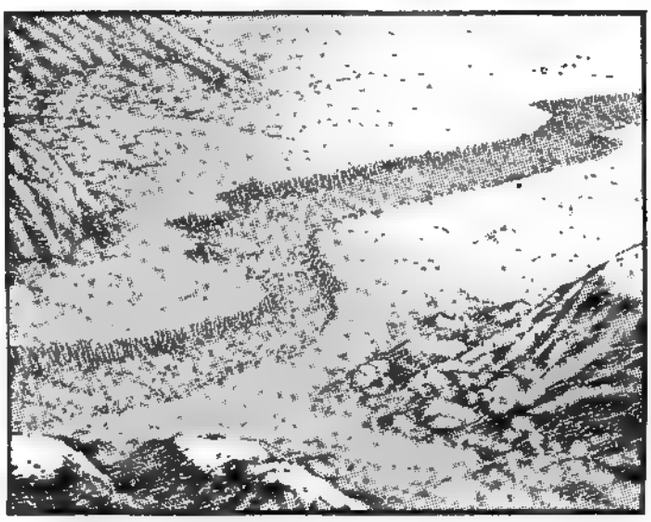

THE SCOUT REPORTED THAT ANOTHER TROOP WAS DISCOVERED TO OUR EAST.
YUE JIN

OUR EAST IS A VITAL GROUND, SIR. WE CAN'T LOSE IT!
I'M WILLING TO GO AND FEND OFF THE INTRUSION!

EAST?
THAT FAST?



*SFX: GALLOPING



SCRAM.

*SFX. CHA~
KILL

SFX: CHA
喀

THAT YOUNG MASTER IS STILL AROUND.

A FIGHT IS STARTING THERE.

NICE OPPORTUNITY!

HURRY! HE'S HEADING FOR OUR YOUNG MASTER!
!

REAR GUARD! REAR GUARD, YOU HEAR!

WHY IS HE COMING BACK?

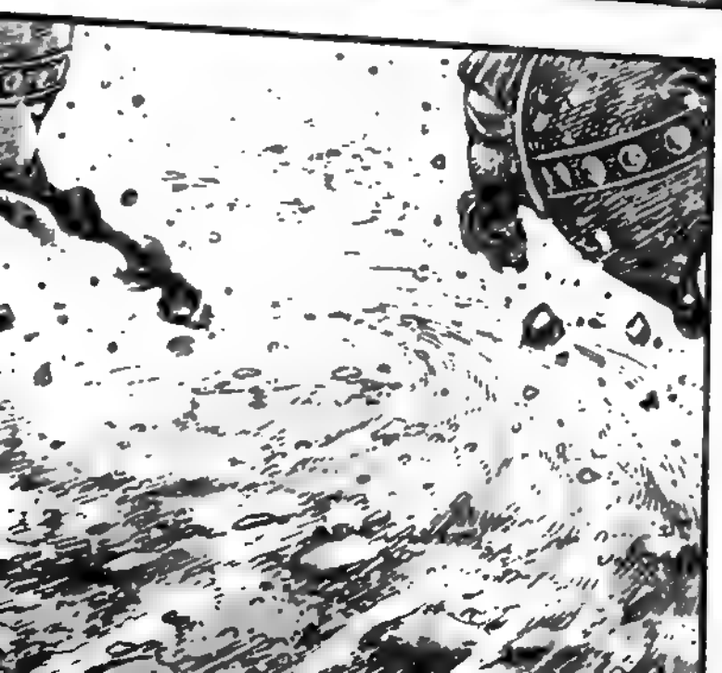
LOOK OUT, YOUNG MASTER!
BLOCK HIM! DON'T LET HIM NEAR OUR YOUNG MASTER!
THAT MAN IS NOW ON HORSEBACK!
SCRAM.

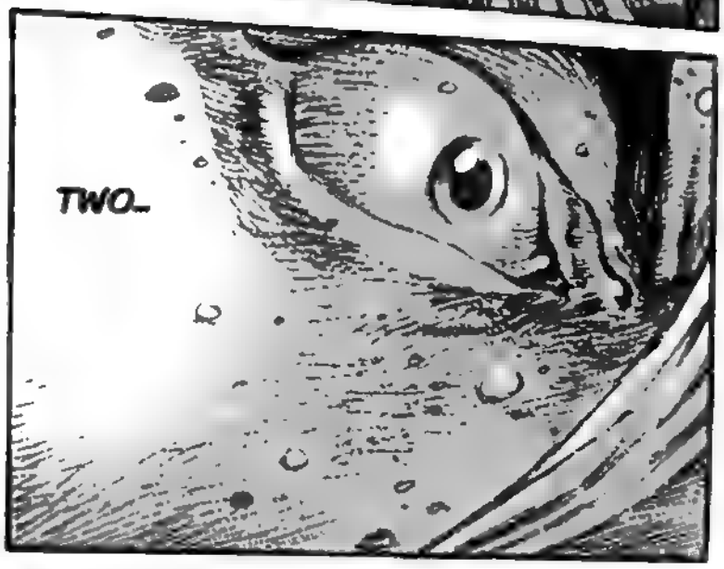
嘶
SFX: HORSE NEIGH
WATCH OUT. I'M SWITCHING WEAPONS.

*SFX: CHA~
PISS OFF YOU BASTARD!
A... ANOTHER ONE!

KILL
THAT GUY...
*SFX CHA~

*ALT: "SAW GHOST"; THIS HAS THE CONNOTATION OF "DAMN SUCH BAD LUCK"





HEY THERE.

IT... IT'S OVER!
DIE!
YOUNG MASTER!
MINE!

SFX: CHA
喀
!
!

YOU!
YOU'RE STILL ALIVE?
YOUNG MASTER!

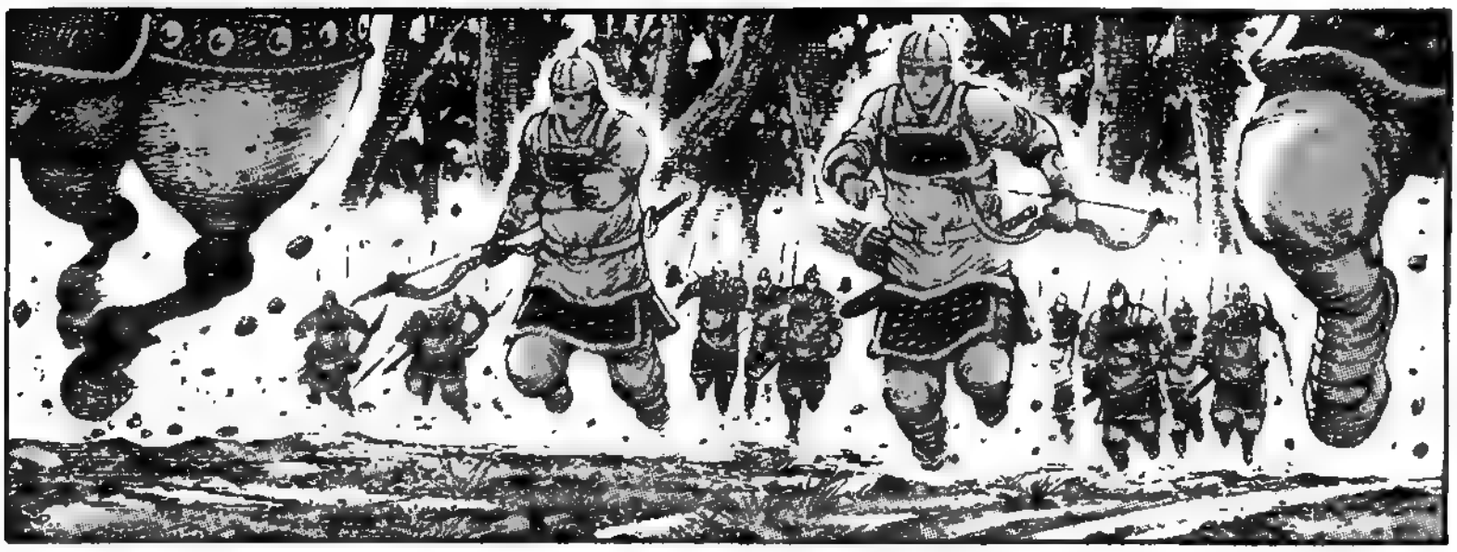
I...
YOUNG MASTER!

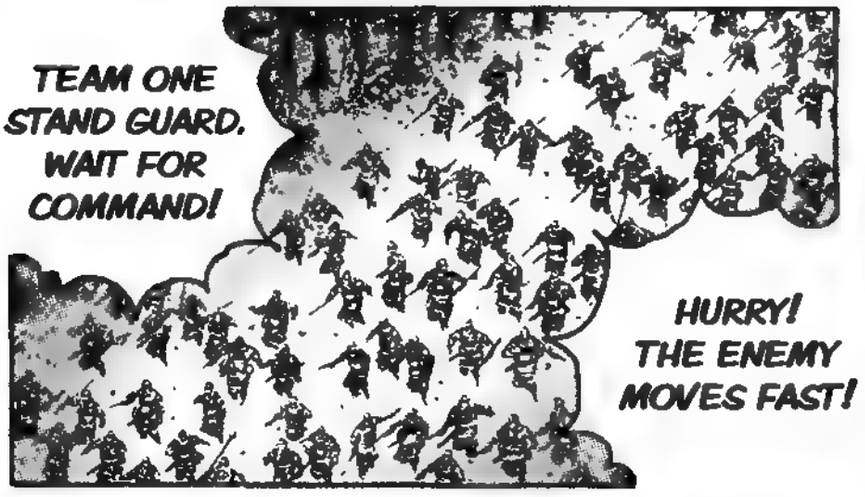
HAVE I DIED?
AFTER YOU, YOUNG MASTER.

ZHANG HE WILL BE THE REAR GUARD.

HE ALWAYS STAYED BEHIND.
(OR "THE LAST TO GO")

HE BECAME SECOND TO NONE
DURING ZHONG DA'S TIME




TEAM ONE STAND GUARD. WAIT FOR COMMAND!
HURRY! THE ENEMY MOVES FAST!

SIR! ENEMY IN THE WOODS AHEAD!

TEAM TWO AND THREE, FORMA- TIONS!

CHAPTER 277 THE PRESENCE OF A FORMIDABLE ENEMY

YUE JIN, TEST THE ENEMY'S STATUS!

LEFT TWO UP THREE, FIVE HUNDRED, ONE ROUND!

ARCHERS, LEFT TWO UP THREE, FIVE HUNDRED SHOTS, ONE VOLLEY!

休
*SFX. SHOO~

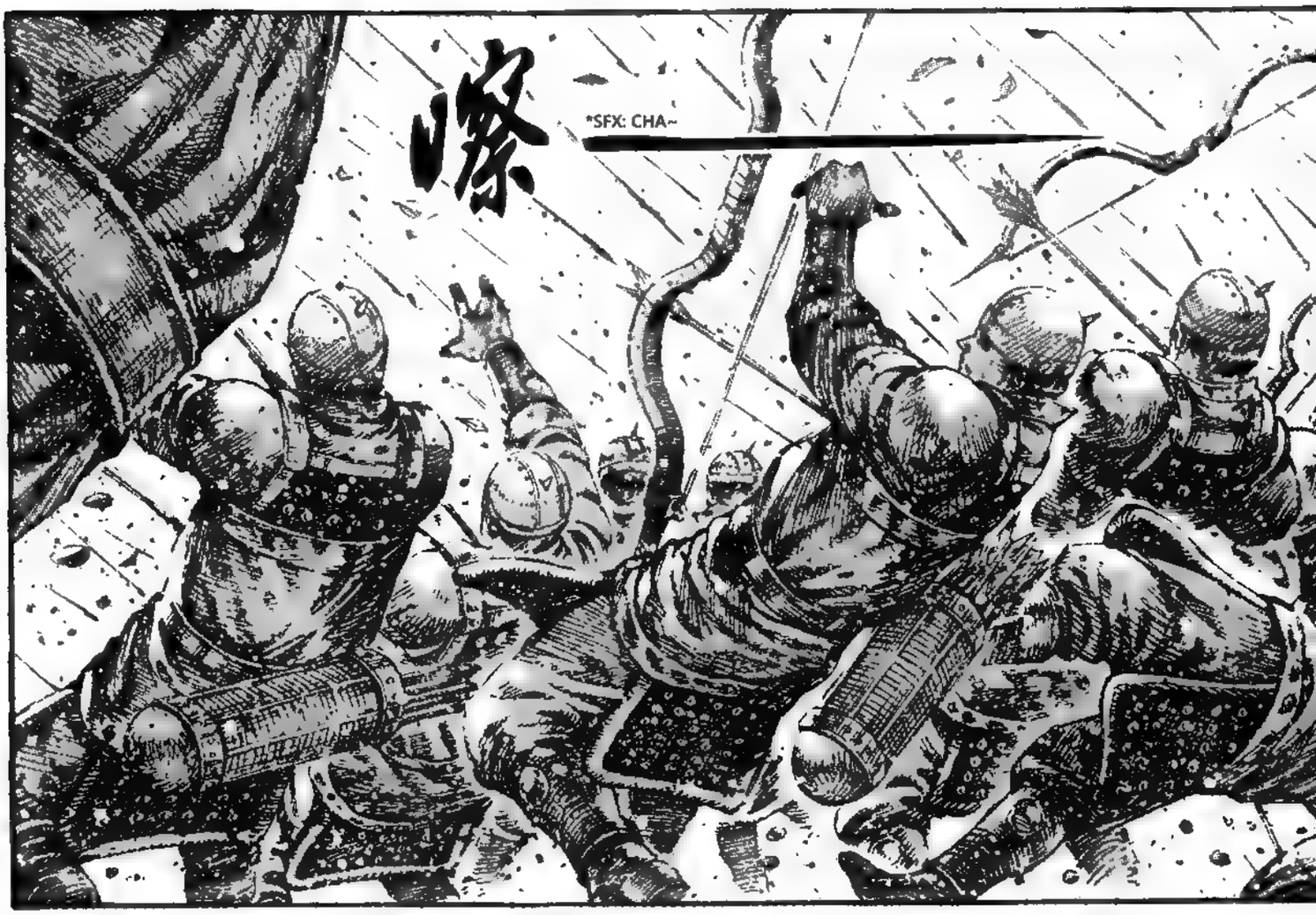
FIRE!

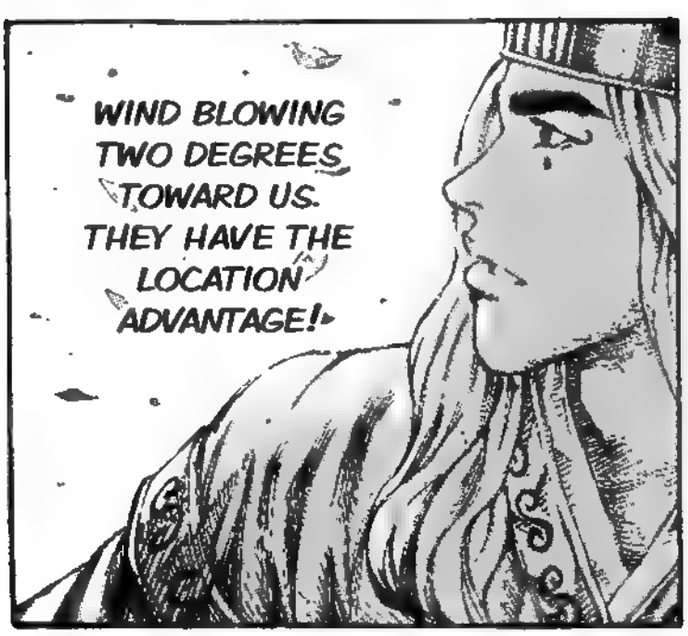
*SFX: SHOO~

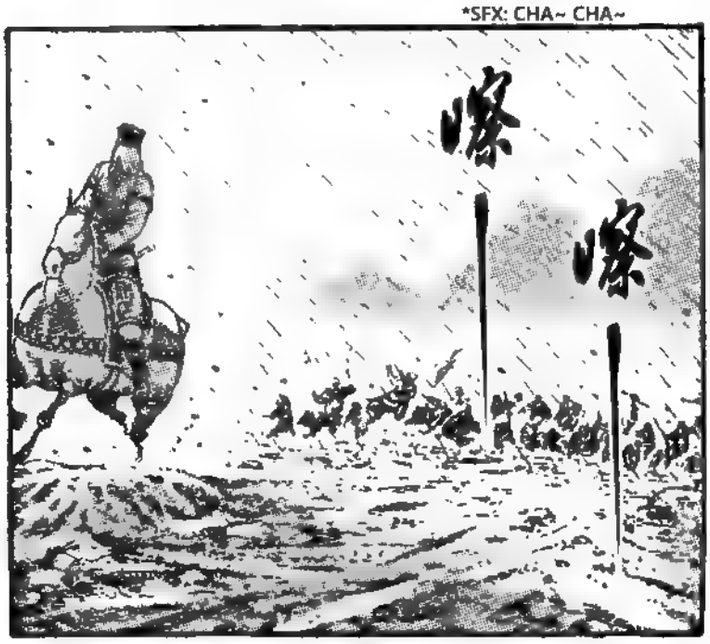
休

WHOA!

!


*SFX: CHA~
嚓


WIND BLOWING TWO DEGREES TOWARD US. THEY HAVE THE LOCATION ADVANTAGE!


*SFX: CHA~ CHA~
嚓
嚓

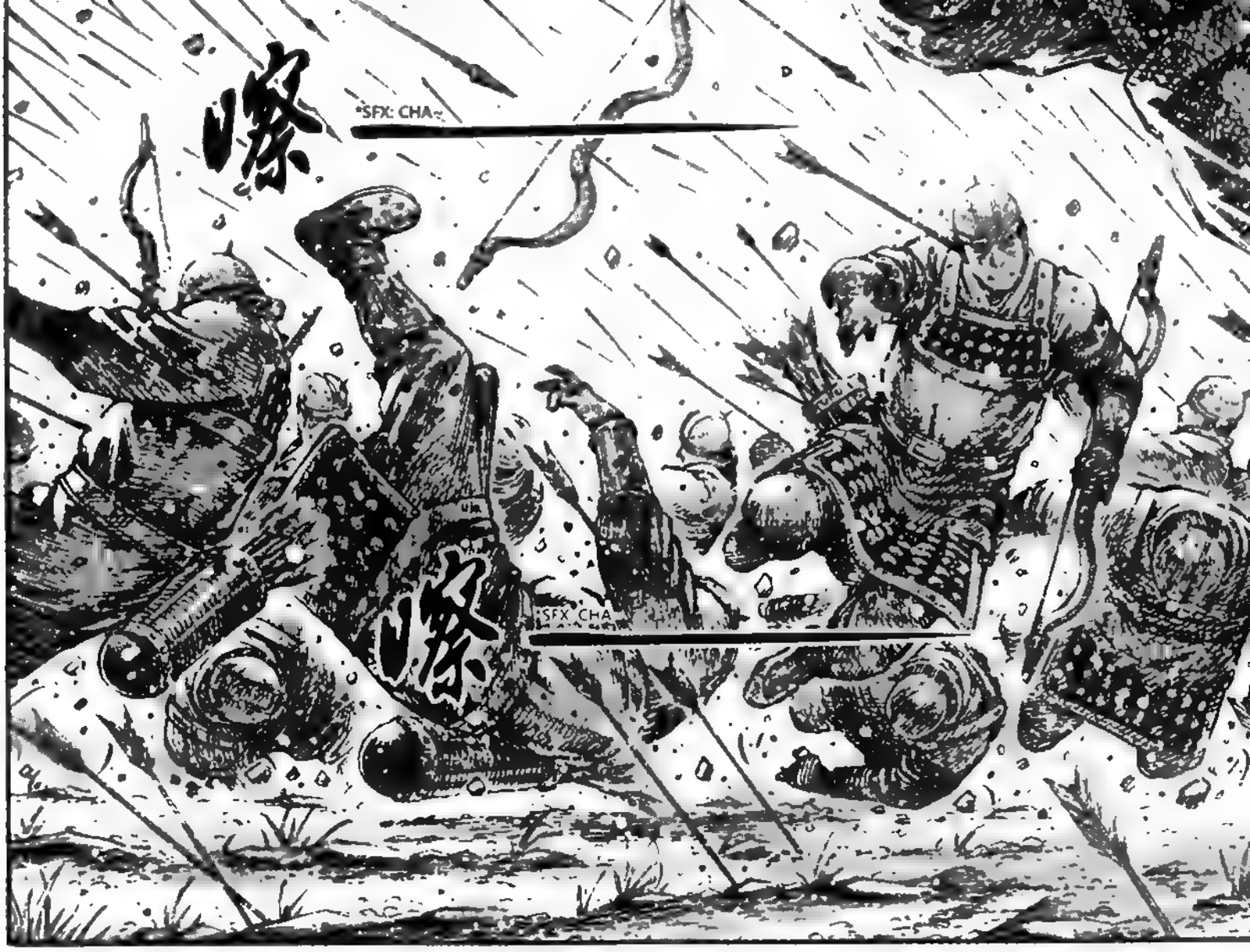
THE ENEMY IS AT LEFT ONE. TEAM TWO UP. FIVE HUNDRED SHOTS. TWO VOLLEYS!

LEFT ONE UP THREE. GET READY!

*SFX: SHOO~

*SFX. SHOO~

EVEN FASTER THIS TIME!

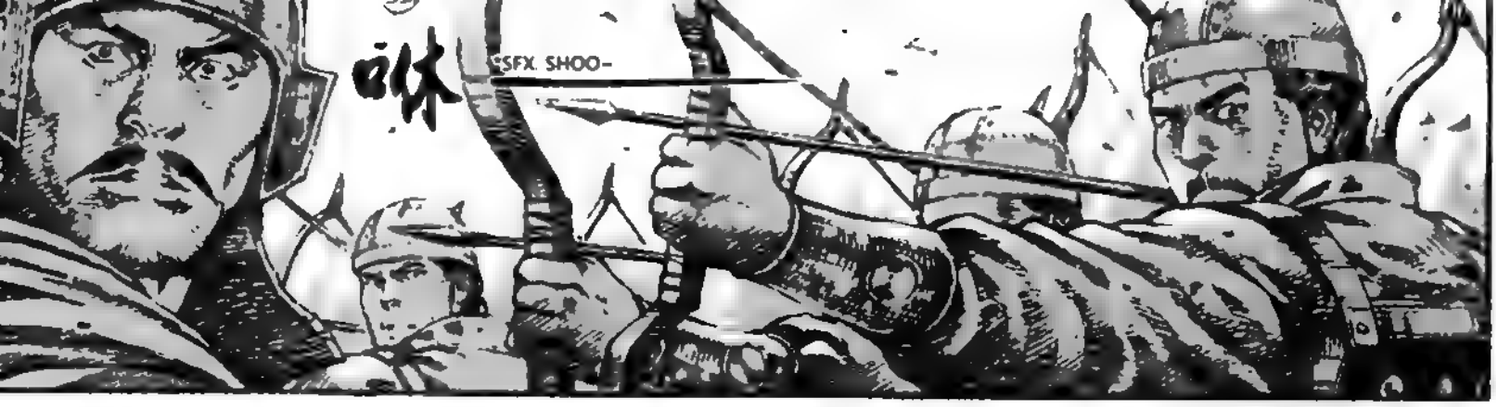

SFX: CHA~
SFX: CHA

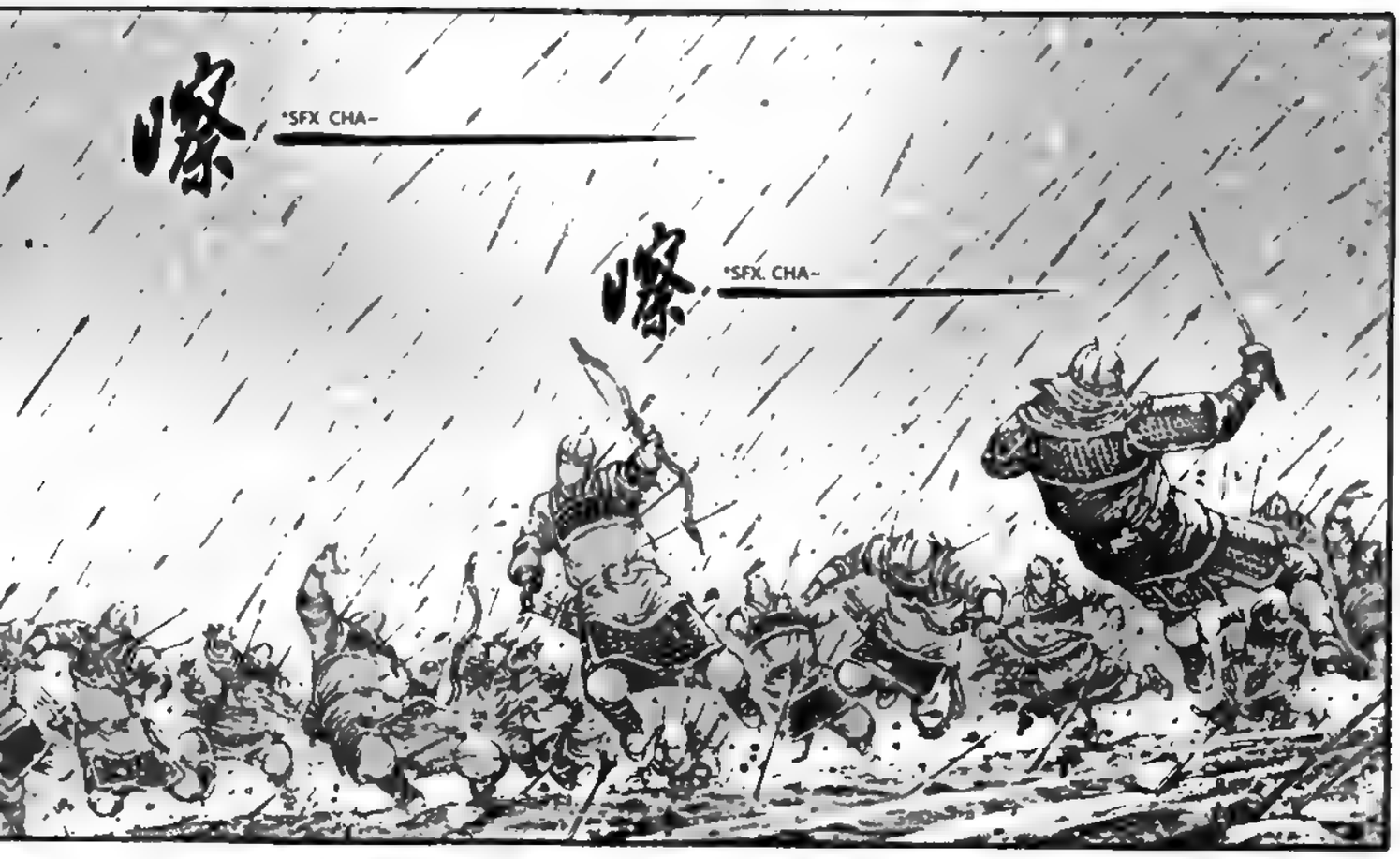
FIFTY STEPS BACK!

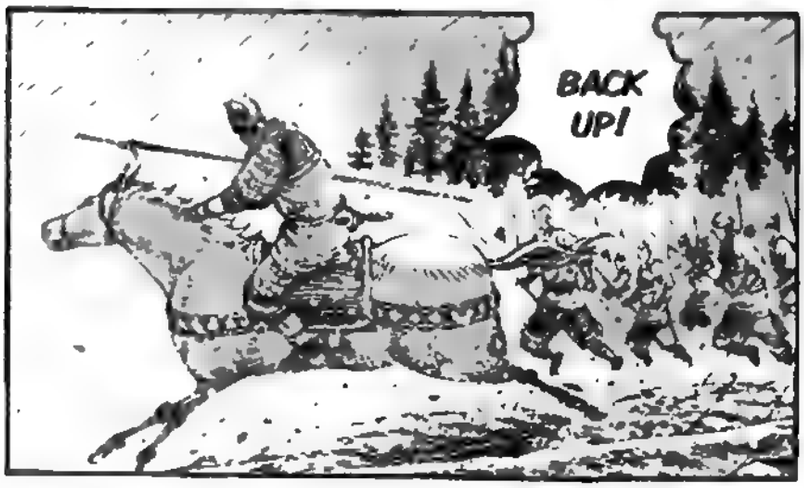
THIS VOLLEY IS FASTER. THEY HAVE ADVANCED.

GET READY!

TEAM THREE. LEFT ONE UP TWO!


*SFX. SHOO~


*SFX. CHA~
*SFX. CHA~

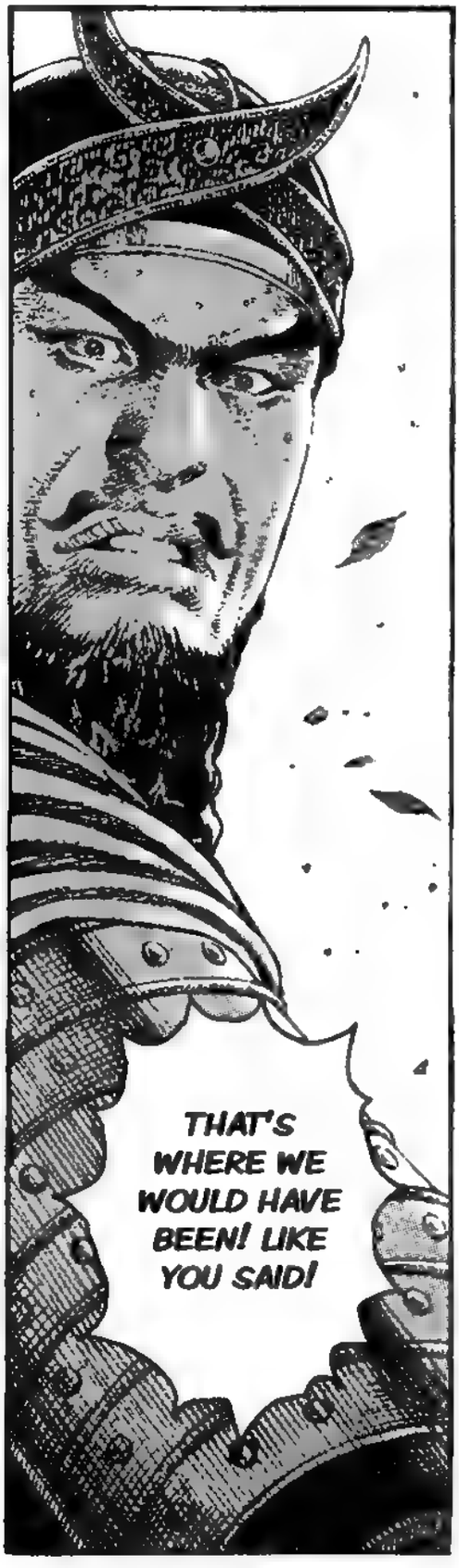

BACK UP!

ENEMY AT LEFT FOUR ALSO. FIFTY STEPS FORWARD!

WAIT. THE ENEMY IS PLOTTING OUR MOVEMENTS.
HAVING SUCCESSFULLY ENTERED THE EAST SIDE, THEY MUST KNOW OUR DEPLOYMENT VERY WELL.
ADVISOR XUN, YOU MEAN...
STOP FOR NOW. WAIT AND SEE!
YOU WERE RIGHT. NO ONE BUT ME CAN LEAD THIS BATTLE!

*SFX: SHOO~
吋

THERE ARE TWO GROUPS OF ENEMY AHEAD. WE CAN'T ADVANCE ANYMORE. WE MUST FIGHT THEM IN THE WOODS.


THAT'S WHERE WE WOULD HAVE BEEN! LIKE YOU SAID!

EVERYONE INTO THE WOODS!

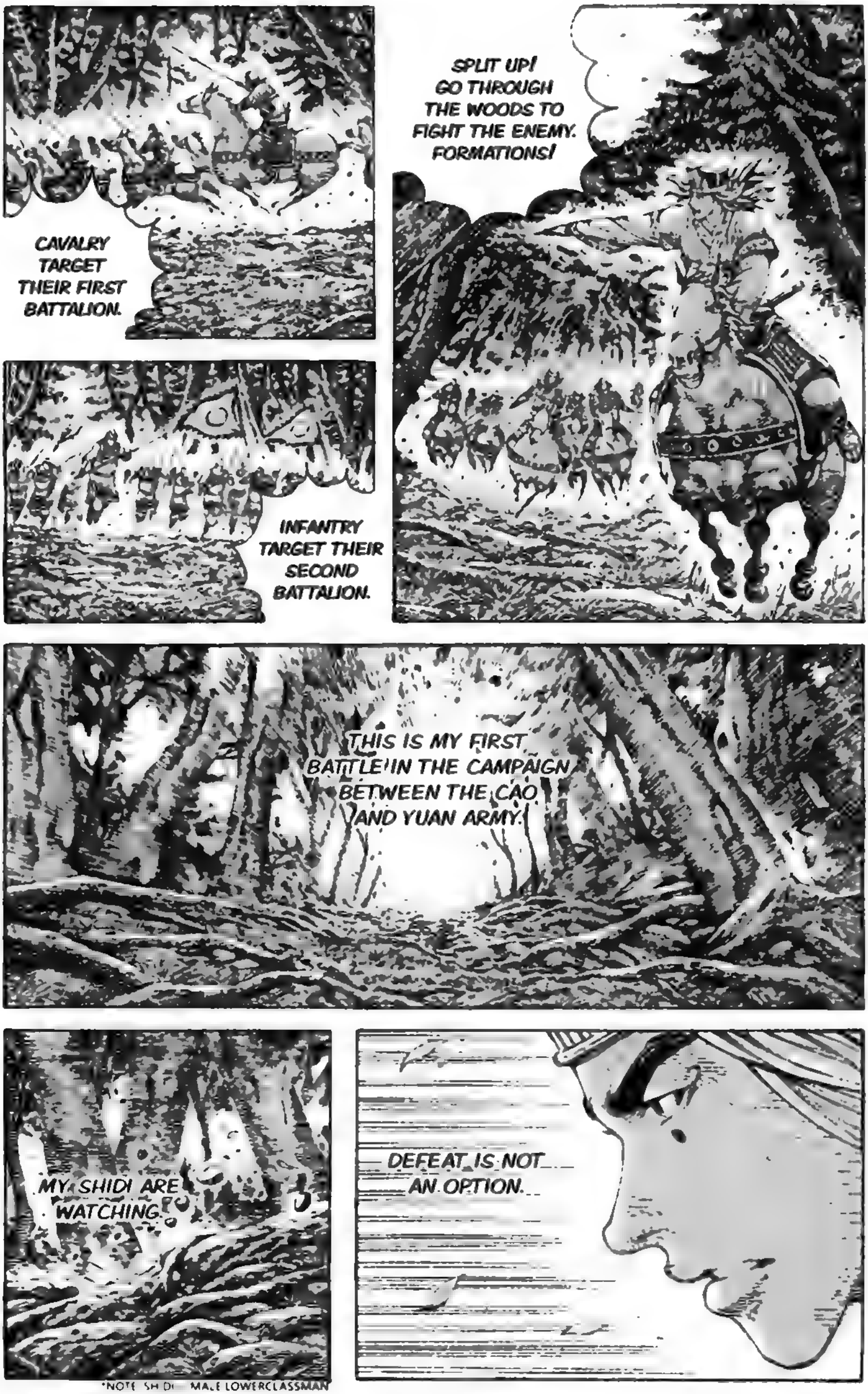
ONE.
TWO.
THREE!

LOOK. THEY FIRED AGAIN!

HERE THEY COME.

DONE!

*SFX: SHOO~



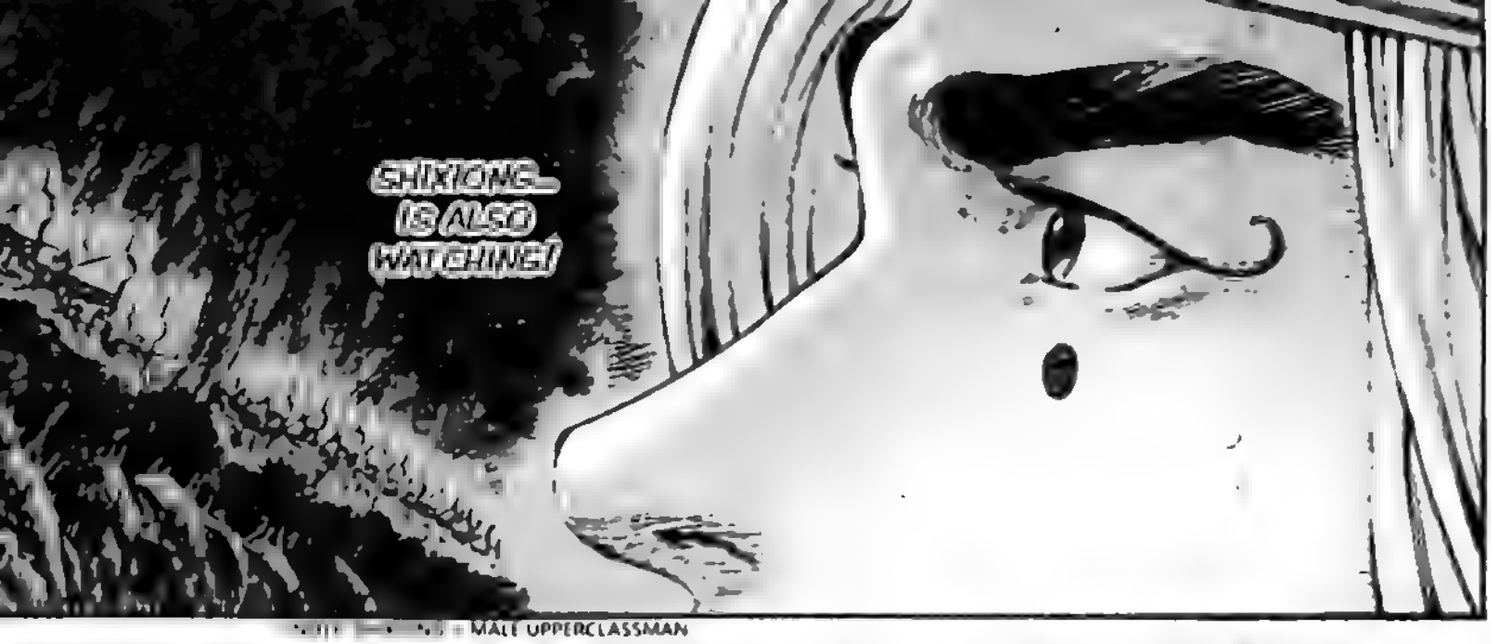
*NOTE SHIDI = MALE LOWERCLASSMAN

MASTER...
IS ALSO
WATCHING!

!

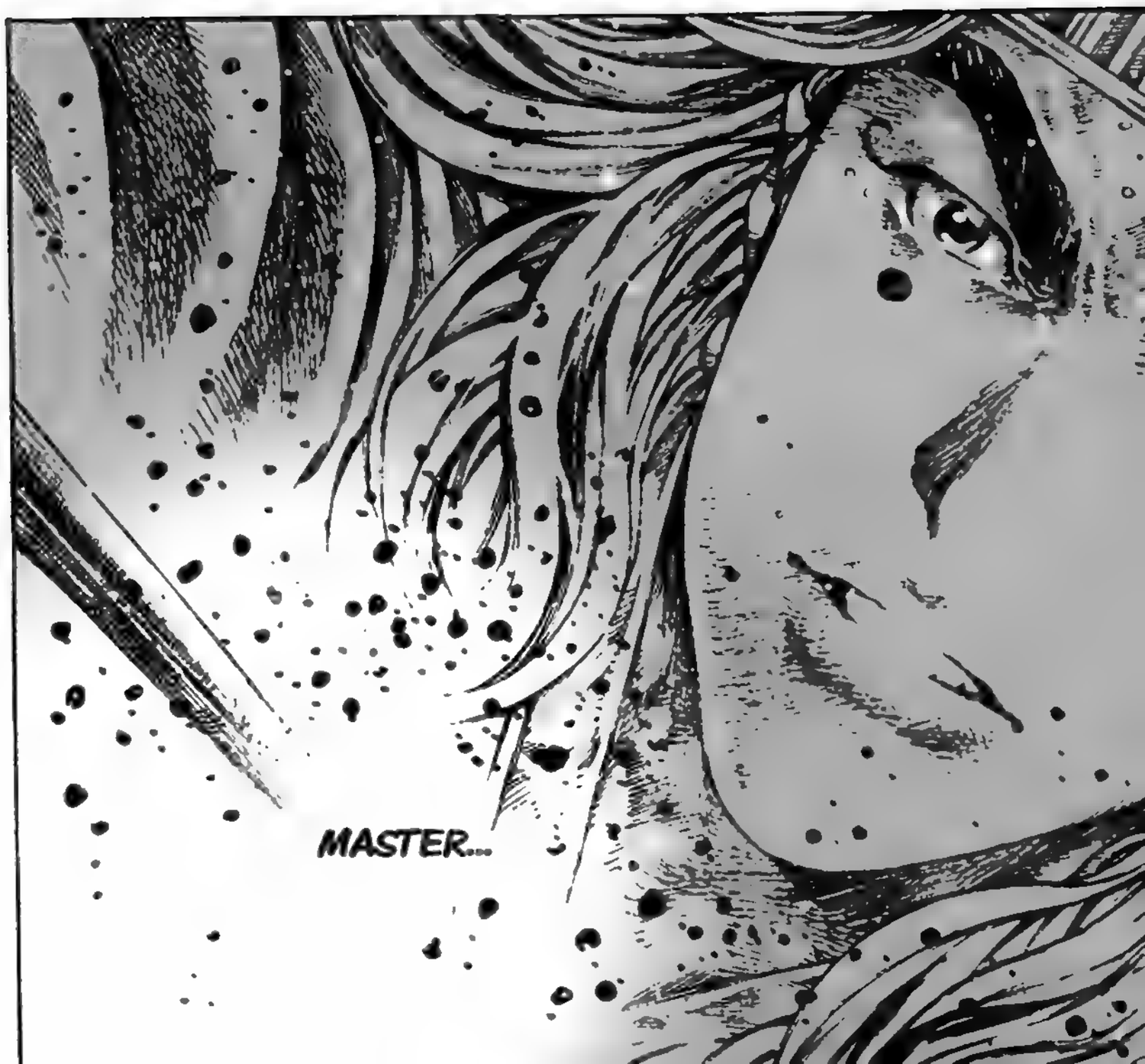
LISTEN UP!
*ALT HEAR (MY, COMMAND YUAN ARMY
AM... AMBUSH!
TEAM ONE, TARGET THEIR CAVALRY!
TEAM THREE, TARGET...
TEAM TWO, TARGET THEIR INFANTRY!

THE ENEMY..



MALE UPPERCLASSMAN

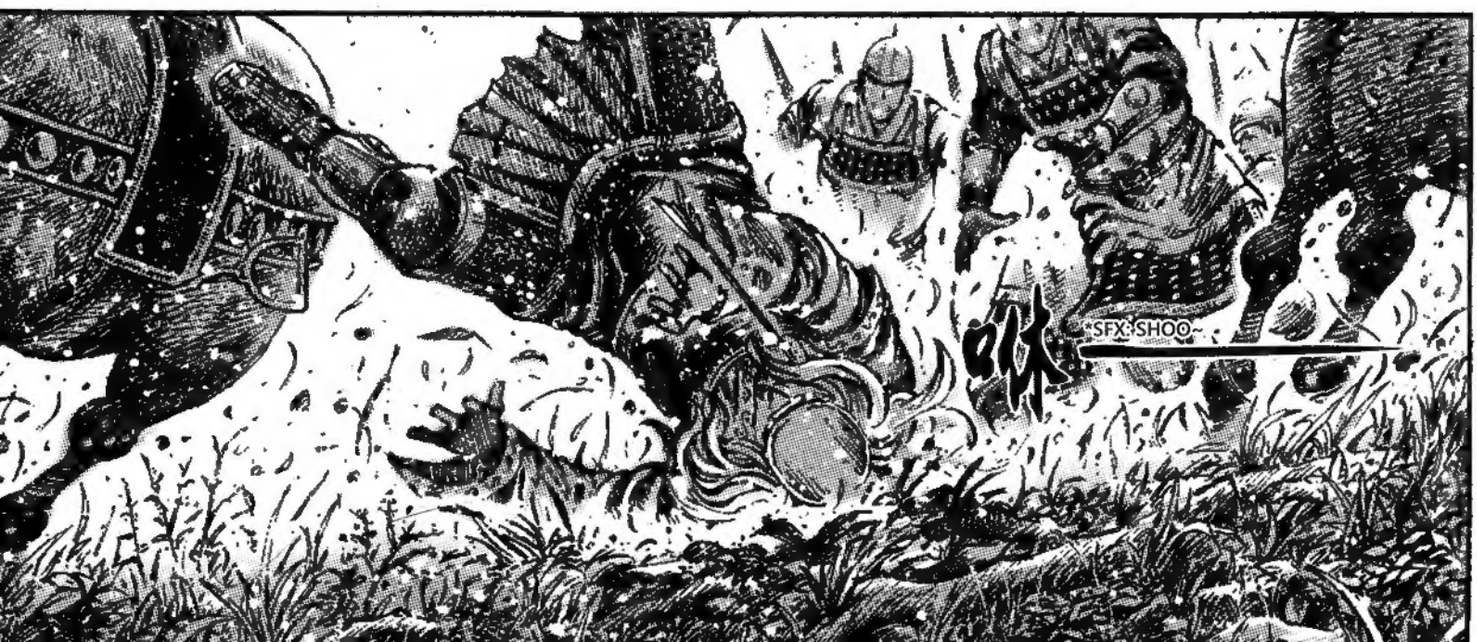
*SFX. CHA-


MASTER...

THE BOND BETWEEN
EIGHT GENIUSES...

GAO
LAN

FIRE.


SFX: SHOO~

IS NO
MORE!

ONE DOWN.

WATER MIRROR RETIRED ON THAT DAY...